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WOODROW  
WILSON

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WOODROW WILSON AS PRESIDENT

# Woodrow Wilson

## THE MAN WHO LIVES ON

BY

JOHN K. WINKLER

*Author of*

*"Morgan the Magnificent"*

*and*

*"Incredible Carnegie"*



1933

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TO

A. N.

*who understands*





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*Chapter 1*

A LONELY  
MAN

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## CHAPTER ONE

### A LONELY MAN

WOODROW WILSON GAVE HIS FELLOW MAN EVERYTHING but himself.

This fault, if fault it was, explains both his triumph and his tragedy. On tide of circumstance, adroitly caught at flood, he made himself a man for the ages. Less than a fleeting decade after his death he is already a fabled figure to millions. That is his triumph.

His tragedy, it seems to me, is that he died without revealing himself fully to a single soul. A thousand men throw a thousand facets upon the character and personality of our twenty-eighth President. None, one feels, really touched the inner core of the angular, jagged man who preached a message that echoes increasingly in the hearts and minds of mankind.

Some psychic force doomed Woodrow Wilson to travel alone. And like all lonely travelers, he saw many things that remain dark to the gregarious. All his life he fought his constitutional limitations. At the end he went down fighting. His was the real glory of the conquered.

The impartial observer, minutely conning the Wilson saga, is impressed by the astonishing naïveté of the protagonist. It seems almost incredible that a person so simple, so artless, so apparently ingenuous, should have become, for a brief year or two, dictator of the world.



Comes to mind indomitable old Georges Clemenceau's ironic *bon mot* that the task of making peace was rather difficult when he had on one side an individual (Lloyd George) who imagined he was Napoleon, and on the other side a man (Wilson) who imagined he was Jesus Christ.

The old Tiger had a disconcerting way of touching raw spots. Wilson was far from a god. But in those tremulous months, when he held the fate of the world between thumb and forefinger, Wilson did develop a very definite Messianic complex. The wonder is that he did not become a raging megalomaniac.

Woodrow Wilson enjoyed to the full his electric years of power and glory. They were the culmination of his blithe journey from the cradle. From boyhood Wilson was pretty much accustomed to having his own way. Even in childhood he lived in a microcosm of his own. His stunning epic might well be called *The Little Boy Who Taught Himself to Become President*. Bespectacled little "Tommy" Wilson was the swaggercock of whatever group he deigned to join. Games had to be played his way or not at all—an unfortunate quality in boy or man.

His playmates were awed and overawed by him. But he never kindled a real spark of love in them. Handicapped all his life by physical frailties, young Wilson early determined to conquer by sheer intellectual force. In this he succeeded admirably. Still he was not content. He wanted to dazzle. So he cultivated certain social artifices aimed to convince others, perhaps even him-

self, that he possessed a gusty, rollicking spirit. In this rôle he was never quite natural.

Woodrow Wilson, one is forced to conclude, was a humanitarian only in the abstract. His distaste for the usual run of ordinary contact amounted almost to mania. Yet, when he forced himself, he could captivate most women and some men. Usually, though, some icy volcano within made him retreat just at the moment of melting.

Once, in a White House round-robin chat, a visitor got off a bit of whimsy that pleased the President immensely. Spontaneously Wilson raised his hand to clap the narrator on the back. The friendly gesture was never completed. Some power or instinct beyond the President's control stayed his hand. Brusquely he plunged his hand into his pocket.

"It all happened in a flash," remarked the eye-witness who recounted the incident. "Mr. Wilson acted as though he had done something disreputable. It was tragic."

By way of quirky contrast, there is evidence that Wilson could and did relax in the intimacy of his home. Sometimes, amid the splashing of water in his bathroom, he could be heard quoting passages from the Lake poets, singing a snatch of song or repeating lusty lines from his favorite play of Shakespeare, "King Henry VIII". He was especially fond of Wolsey's advice to Cromwell:

Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition.  
By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,

The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?  
 Love thyself last: cherish those hearts that hate  
 thee;

Corruption wins not more than honesty.  
 Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,  
 To silence envious tongues. Be just, and fear  
 not:

Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
 Thy God's and truth's; then if thou fall'st, O  
 Cromwell,  
 Thou fall'st a blessed martyr!

Wilson had a habit, too, of standing before the mirror and rehearsing his speeches with words and gestures.

Whenever he heard a new anecdote or an apt story he tried it out upon the adoring women of his household. If it won their applause he added it to his repertoire. Limericks were his particular passion. His favorite was:

For beauty I am not a star,  
 There are others more handsome by far.  
 But my face I don't mind it,  
 For I am behind it;  
 It's the people in front that I jar.

His moments of exuberance were rare. Much of the time physical ills pressed upon him. During a great part of his life he suffered from indigestion, biliousness and frequent headaches. Although not known until after his death, a retinal hemorrhage had practically destroyed the sight of his right eye. The misfortune was caused by

overstrain while he was president of Princeton. During this period, also, he suffered a slight thrombosis, or blood clot, in a leg artery.

In 1913 he brought with him to the White House a stomach pump and old-fashioned tar tablets with which he had sought for years to overcome his balky digestion. Not without difficulty young Dr. Cary Grayson persuaded him to give up this outworn treatment. Grayson, who was later to become almost a son to Wilson, substituted golf and automobile rides. The patient's health improved perceptibly.

Until he went down under a stroke of paralysis in 1919, it seemed that Woodrow Wilson might live as long as his hearty Scotch and North Irish forbears.

In his last years Wilson became pure Scotch, an iron-nerved old Covenanter, using every aid he could command to carry out what he devoutly believed to be the Will of God. In this phase his prototype was Scott's Balfour of Burleigh who smote the enemies of the Lord and feared not. Old histories of Scotland are full of the same narrow, God-fearing men, ready to slay or be slain for what they believed to be right—as revealed to them after long study and fervent prayer.

✓ No crusader, since the beginning of time, ever laid hold of a finer or more splendid idea—World Peace through a League of Nations—than Woodrow Wilson.

Wilson crashed to failure because he insisted on fighting alone. He simply could not co-operate. Instead of attempting to persuade his political enemies, he sought to ram his ideas down every throat by denouncing all

who opposed him as cowards and quitters. A bi-partisan cabal, often employing nauseous methods of attack, stopped him—plus that quality in all of us that will be convinced by fair argument but will not be bulldozed, even by one who has the welfare of the human race at heart.

If the alchemy of Nature had but implanted in Wilson some of the qualities of Abraham Lincoln, Wilson's road to Gethsemane would have been less thorny.

In his great hours of stress and crisis Wilson turned constantly to Lincoln. Once he wrote:

I have read many biographies of Lincoln; I have sought out with the greatest interest the many intimate stories that are told of him, the narratives of nearby friends, the sketches at close quarters, in which those who had the privilege of being associated with him have tried to depict for us the very man himself "in his habit as he lived"; but I have nowhere found a real intimate of Lincoln. I nowhere get the impression in any narrative or reminiscence that the writer had in fact penetrated to the heart of his mystery, or that any man could penetrate to the heart of it. That brooding spirit had no real familiars. I get the impression that it never spoke out in complete self-revelation, and that it could not reveal itself complete to anyone. It was a very lonely spirit that looked out from underneath those

shaggy brows, and comprehended men without fully communing with them, as if, in spite of all its genial efforts at comradeship, it dwelt apart, saw its visions of duty where no man looked on. There is a very holy and very terrible isolation for the conscience of every man who seeks to read the destiny in the affairs for others as well as for himself, for a nation as well as for individuals. That privacy no man can intrude upon. That lonely search of the spirit for the right perhaps no man can assist.

There, it seems to me, we have not Lincoln but Woodrow Wilson naïvely clothing himself in the homely garments of the great Emancipator. The two men were alike in their idealism and high purpose. Each brought into American public life rare integrity and devotion to the truth as he saw it. There the resemblance ceases. One never feels that Lincoln was looking into the future and visioning himself in bronze. Lincoln rubbed right always.

There was a streak of the synthetic in Woodrow Wilson, a streak that becomes more pronounced the deeper one probes. Wilson must yet prove his right to stand upon the lofty pedestals of Washington and Lincoln.

Lincoln and Washington went out to meet life. Wilson diluted life to meet his own hypersensitive nature. Clinton Gilbert, a brilliant Washington correspondent who observed Wilson closely over the years, says of him: "When all his personal history becomes known, when

his papers and letters have all been published and read, when the memoirs of others have told all there is to be told, there will stand clear something inadequate, a lack of robustness, mental or nervous, an excessive sensitiveness, over self-consciousness, shrinking from life, a neurotic something that in the end brought on defeat and the final overthrow. He was never quite a normal man with the average man's capacity to endure and enjoy, but a strange, impeded, self-absorbed personality."

Granted all this, Wilson bore his cross without a whimper. There was something heroic and sublime in the stricken Covenanter's last great fight. The figures of Henry Cabot Lodge and the other irreconcilables of both political faiths, who broke Wilson upon the wheel, are already fading into the mist; while the spirit of the man they destroyed lives on.

Who now calls to mind, without a sense of shame, the scene in Wilson's sick room in December, 1919, when the Senate of the United States sent two of its members to discover whether the President was mentally and physically capable of filling his high office? Two months before, Wilson had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. Though his mind was clear, his left arm and part of his lower torso were paralyzed.

Albert Fall, of New Mexico, later to go to Federal prison for his share in the Teapot Dome scandal, was one of the visitors. After a forty-minute interview, during which the President discussed many matters with unusual animation, the committee rose to leave. Fall, a most vituperative Wilson critic, paused a moment and

said: "Mr. President, I want you to know that I am praying for you."

Wilson glared.

"If I could have got out of bed I would have hit that man," he later told his cabinet associate, David F. Houston. "Why did he want to put me in bad with the Almighty? He must have known that God would take the opposite view from him on any subject."

At that time Wilson's world was coming down about him in wreckage. He was probably the only man in Washington who did not sense the impending doom of his dream to put America into his cherished League of Nations.

Wilson had lost the invaluable services of his faithful adviser and right bower, Colonel E. M. House. There was no one to take House's place. For some reason, still obscure, Wilson had permitted the friendship to lapse. For seven long years the quiet, capable little man from Texas had been Wilson's balance wheel. The minds of the two men were truly complementary. House was subtle, deep, completely devoted to Wilson and Wilson's school of liberal political thought. Like Wilson he lacked physical robustness. A fall in childhood and a subsequent sunstroke made it necessary for him carefully to guard his health.

House had inherited a comfortable fortune. He found his pleasure in friendships and in searching out and fostering men who showed promise in politics. Although soft spoken and appearing to agree constantly with the other fellow, the Colonel (his title was honorary) was



a man of bold initiative and radical political and social ideas. He believed it the duty of Government to protect the weak from the strong.

House epitomized his theories in a fantastic little novel, *Philip Dru, Administrator*, published significantly enough in 1912, the year of Wilson's first election.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Dru, an army officer, finds the people sullen and rebellious because of the growing abuses of monopoly, privilege and corruption. In a bloody revolt, Dru seizes the government and makes himself administrator. He smashes the Credit Trust by providing flexible currency, abolishes protective tariffs, initiates graduated income taxes, old-age pensions and a variety of other reforms. Many of these reforms paralleled the epochal domestic measures of the first Wilson Administration. House's masterly manipulations played a tremendous part in putting them through Congress.

When the European war broke out, House and Wilson dreamed magnificent dreams—for Wilson. Neither was deceived by the essentially economic nature of the struggle between the two groups of European belligerents. In February, 1916, after one of his many confidential missions to London, Paris and Berlin, House reported to Wilson that "in each Government I have visited I have found stubbornness, determination, selfishness and cant." The prescient envoy added:

"One continually hears self-glorification and the highest motives attributed to themselves because of their part in the War. But I may tell you that my observation

is that incompetent statesmanship and selfishness is at the bottom of it all. It is not so much a breaking down of civilization as a lack of wisdom in those that govern; and history, I believe, will bring an awful indictment against those who were short-sighted and selfish enough to let such a tragedy happen."

House's views and those of Wilson coincided thoroughly.

Wilson abhorred war with a mighty hatred. He was a pacifist of pacifists by training and temperament. However, he knew history. And history told him that where a nation's economic interests lie, there eventually go its muskets and men to bear them.

Wilson understood the centripetal forces, financial, sentimental and otherwise, that tended to draw America toward the Allies. But he fought like a trapped soul to keep the United States out of the European conflagration.

For weeks, following the dismissal of the German Ambassador, von Bernstorff, Wilson prayed and hoped for a miracle that would avert a declaration of war upon Germany. House and a dozen other advisers told him the die must at last be cast. Finally he summoned Frank I. Cobb, powerful editorial writer of the *New York World*, in whose judgment he had great confidence.

"Cobb," he said, and his voice had never been more serious, "once lead the American people into war and they will forget there ever was such a thing as tolerance. To fight, you must be brutal and ruthless. The spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fiber of our

national life, infecting Congress, the courts, the policeman on the beat, the man in the street. Conformity will be the only virtue. And every man who refuses to conform will have to pay the penalty.

"If there is any alternative"—the President's voice almost broke—"for God's sake, let's take it!"

Cobb could see no way out.

When he left, Wilson was still clinging to the possibility of peace.

That night Cobb arrived at his Connecticut farm, low and dejected, and remarked to his wife:

"By Jove, I don't think we are going in. I believe the President is again going to turn the other cheek."

Next day, April 2, 1917, Wilson made a dramatic appearance before Congress and asked the legislative body to recognize the existence of a state of war.

Once in the war, Wilson fought like an inspired prophet—fought with winged words and massed men—for peace. The spirit of his Scotch-Presbyterian ancestors surged in his soul.

His conscience had spoken. He was the Anointed of the Lord.

Examination of his stern ancestry and life-long religious training will make clear why the lonely, conscientious pacifist became a bold, implacable warrior.

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*Chapter 2*

THE WOODROWS  
AND THE  
WILSONS

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## CHAPTER TWO

### THE WOODROWS AND THE WILSONS

WOODROW WILSON CAME TO THE WHITE HOUSE DIRECT from Scotland, with few detours.

Both the Woodrows and the Wilsons sprang from those dauntless 16th-century religious rebels who helped John Knox organize the Presbyterian Church in Scotland.

The Woodrows were his mother's people. More than one of them witnessed the dramatic encounters between Knox and Mary, Queen of Scots, in the struggle between Mary's Roman Catholic faith and the Protestantism of her people.

Although their habitat for two hundred years was northern Ireland, Woodrow Wilson's paternal ancestors proudly termed themselves Scotch-Irish. In characteristics, tastes and temperament these border Presbyterians resembled their Scotch co-religionists rather than their countrymen to the south, the Roman Catholic Irish.

In the United States the Catholic Irish greatly outnumber those of Protestant faith. It was not until Woodrow Wilson began to play the fascinating game of politics that emphasis was laid upon his Irish strain.

Neither the Wilsons nor the Woodrows were long rooted in American soil. The first Wilson, James, a

printer, landed in Philadelphia in 1808. He was Woodrow Wilson's grandfather. Dr. Thomas Woodrow, the mother's father, with his seven children came to Canada in 1836 as a missionary. His wife died on the voyage.

After a year in Canada, Thomas Woodrow became pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Chillicothe, Ohio. Graduate of the University of Glasgow, he was a man of deep intellectual capacity, devotee of the Greek and Latin classical writers, and a stern exponent of the scriptural philosophy of Calvin and Knox.

For generations the Woodrows had been famous as preachers and scholars in Scotland. "There have been so many preachers in my family," Woodrow Wilson was wont to recall, "that sometimes, when I am making a speech, it is difficult for me to remember that I am not in the pulpit."

The Wilsons and the Woodrows met and fused in Ohio. Though of sharply differing social strata, the two families were essentially of one broad blood stream.

Printer James Wilson hailed from County Londonderry, Ulster. He launched the house of Wilson on American soil in truly energetic fashion by marrying a shipmate, Ann Adams, also an emigrant from Ulster and of Scotch Presbyterian stock. They were married on November 1, 1808, in the manse of the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. The bridegroom was twenty-one.

Jimmy Wilson, as he was called, went prospecting for a job. He found it on William Duane's Philadelphia

## THE WOODROWS AND THE WILSONS

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*Aurora*, leading organ of the Democratic party. Duane was a fiery adherent of Jefferson. He joyed in combat. He transmitted to young Wilson his own fiercely personal brand of journalism. The men became cronies. Wilson named the first of his ten children William Duane Wilson.

In four years the hustling Jimmy Wilson had advanced from printer to publisher. Soon Duane's adventurous blood led him to South America. He turned the paper over to Wilson. The latter tried his hand at writing. *Aurora* readers could detect little difference in the fire-eating style of the new editor. But fire-eating editorials don't always line the larder.

By the time four little Wilsons had popped into the world, as quickly as Nature would permit, Editor Jimmy began casting about for a richer field. He took his tribe over the mountains into the Valley of the Ohio. Those were boom days. Great deposits of coal had been discovered in the Valley. Pittsburgh was in its birth throes as a great industrial center.

Printer Wilson's eager eye roved about in search of a good location for a newspaper. He settled upon the thriving Ohio River hamlet of Steubenville, Ohio, bought a limping sheet called the *Western Herald* and set out to corral fame and fortune. He succeeded.

He became a town character, eventually a town plutocrat. He branched out into real-estate speculation. He acquired bonds in railroad and steamship companies. He became a bank director. Always he dabbled in politics. He established a second paper, the *Pennsylv-*



*vania Advocate*, in Pittsburgh. He employed both papers to boost a variety of enterprises.

In those raw, turbulent days Jimmy Wilson's ethical standards were probably neither better nor worse than the prevailing code. Before the cholera took him off in 1850, Editor Wilson had become a Judge of the local court and was building a grand mansion with double wings. Prosperity had mellowed him. Not so his wife, Ann Adams.

Pictures of Ann Adams Wilson in middle and later life show a rather terrifying face, with jutting jaw and challenging eyes. It is the face of a feudist. Her appearance supports the Steubenville legend that she closed her door forever upon a daughter who had dared marry against her wishes. Among her ten children were triplets. The estranged daughter was one. The others, Henry and Edwin Wilson, became generals in the Union army. Ann Adams raised her brood in the strict faith of their fathers. On week-days the boys could not entirely be kept from contact with rude raucous characters who flowed in and out of the newspaper office; but on Sundays they toed the scratch.

The youngest and by far the most brilliant of James and Ann Wilson's children was Joseph Ruggles Wilson, born in Steubenville in 1822.

This boy early showed striking literary talent. He had a natural flair for words. He was a handsome, well-set-up youth with a lively sense of humor. He liked books and he liked people. He was not lacking in vanity and a certain swagger.

## THE WOODROWS AND THE WILSONS

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With increasing prosperity the parents determined to give their youngest the opportunity which had been denied the other children. Accordingly, at eighteen Joseph started off for Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, later called Washington and Jefferson. He waltzed away with college honors. His proud parents heard him deliver the valedictory address, class of 1844.

There was but one career suitable for so promising a young man: the ministry. Joseph's preparation was thorough. Two years at the Western Theological Seminary at Allegheny, Pennsylvania, gave him his groundwork. Then he entered the College of New Jersey (later Princeton), holy of holies of evangelical Presbyterianism. He returned to Steubenville in 1848 licensed to preach but not as yet ordained. Then, as now, there were more preachers than pulpits.

While awaiting a pastorate, the young man took a job as teacher of English in the Steubenville Male Academy. The town also boasted a Female Academy where Janet Woodrow, of Chillicothe, Ohio, was imbibing the polite accomplishments prescribed for the daughters of good families.

Janet Woodrow was fifth child of the scholarly Dr. Thomas Woodrow. Her beauty was classical. She was reserved and bore herself with dignity. She seemed cold. She was really shy. It required all of Joseph Wilson's wit and tact to win this proud, self-contained young Scotch lass. He succeeded. Joseph Wilson and Janet Woodrow were married in June, 1849. The bride's

father performed the ceremony in the Presbyterian manse in Chillicothe.

The marriage signalized a distinct upward curve for the Wilson family. Dr. Thomas Woodrow's fame as a scholar and theologian had spread throughout the Middle West. Soon he was to become pastor of the large and influential Hogg Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio.

Most remarkable of the Woodrows was Janet's older brother, James. Already he had widened the Woodrow horizon by extending his studies beyond the bounds of theology. After graduating from Jefferson College he took postgraduate courses in the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard and then won a master's degree at Heidelberg, Germany.

James Woodrow was strikingly to influence Woodrow Wilson's formative years. There were few fields of knowledge which he did not explore. He spent much of his life in a tortuous attempt to accommodate natural science and the dogmatic theology upon which he had been reared. In later life he supported the theory of evolution. He was twice accused of heresy in South Carolina, where he made his home. The trials are famous in Southern annals.

Always James Woodrow fought alone and with no spirit of compromise. Every combat was a holy war with him. He resolutely refused to temporize with the truth as he saw it. Nor would he forgive his enemies unless they showed true repentance. He was a Woodrow to the very core. Many of his qualities leap out at us as

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we examine the career of his nephew, Woodrow Wilson.

But we are ahead of our story.

A month after his marriage to Janet Woodrow, Joseph Wilson was ordained by the Ohio Presbytery. He did not obtain a suitable pastorate for five years. In the interim, he taught rhetoric for a term at Jefferson College, his Alma Mater; then accepted an offer to teach at Hampden Sidney College, Virginia. Here two daughters were born. The Wilsons seem easily to have accommodated themselves to the softer, more settled life of the South.

Frequently the Rev. Joseph Wilson filled neighboring pulpits as a volunteer. The young professor-preacher was an impressive figure. He wore side-burns and a thick fringe of whisker which concealed his neck. His voice was deep and booming. His eyes were at once intense and gleaming with humor, his manners charming. There was nothing parched about him. He smoked a pipe and was not at all averse to a nip of good whiskey.

He preached, of course, the orthodox gospel. The world was a vale of sin. Jehovah was an angry, majestic Deity who consigned all save the repentant elect to Satan and a pit of molten brimstone. The young substitute minister conceived it no part of his duty to touch upon the burning slavery issue. Although his parents were strongly anti-slavery, Joseph Wilson appears quite easily to have convinced himself that God had placed His imprimatur upon the prevailing Southern caste system.

Preacher Wilson's diction was pleasing. His sentences

were well-rounded and balanced. Those who heard him came away with a very definite impression that here was a young man of force and ability. In truth he was. He was ambitious too. He had no intention of hiding his talents in a crossroads church. Nor was this necessary.

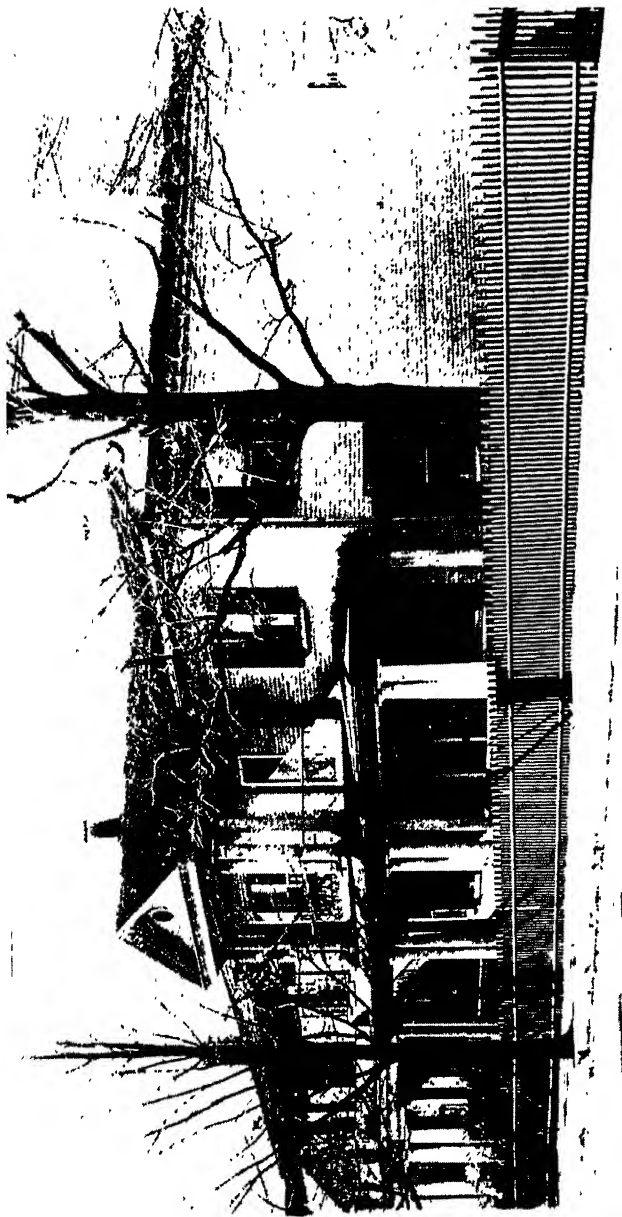
In 1855 the elders of the Presbyterian Church in the fine old Virginia town of Staunton invited him to become their "settled minister." The invitation was at once accepted.

In the Presbyterian manse at Staunton on December 28, 1856, Janet Woodrow Wilson gave birth to her third child, a boy. He was named Thomas Woodrow Wilson for his mother's father.

The child was destined to hold no recollection of his birthplace. For, within eighteen months, the magnetic Dr. Joseph Wilson, still in his thirties, became pastor of the important First Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia. Here he was to remain for twelve eventful years.

The Wilsons now found themselves in a rich and aristocratic atmosphere. The congregation of the Old First was the wealthiest in Augusta—merchants, planters, slave-owners all. A gulf wide as the poles yawned between the fashionably clad men and women who sat in the pews along the broad, carpeted aisles and their slaves in the pillared galleries. The minister and his family lived across the street in a brick mansion shaded by great oaks and elms, with wide entrance hall and huge, high-ceilinged chambers.

Dr. Joseph Wilson took his place at once among the



THE MANSE, STAUNTON, VIRGINIA  
*Birthplace of Woodrow Wilson.*

© Wide World Photos.



## THE WOODROWS AND THE WILSONS

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notable Southern theologians who had long dominated the American Presbyterian Church. All of them championed slavery and later advocated secession—Dr. James H. Thornwell, of the Columbia (South Carolina) Theological Seminary; Dr. John B. Adger, who had translated the Bible into Armenian, also of Columbia Theological; the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Morgan Palmer, of New Orleans, and many others. Dr. Palmer it was who thundered from his pulpit on Thanksgiving Day, 1860, that God Almighty had delegated the South to extend its social system, including slavery, over the entire continent.

The echoes of that astounding sermon were still reverberating when Fort Sumter was fired on. Later in 1861 the National Assembly of the Presbyterian Church met at Philadelphia and formally expelled slave-owners from church membership. The response of the Southern leaders was prompt. They met in the stately edifice of Dr. Joseph Wilson's church in Augusta and organized the Southern Presbyterian Church.

Joseph Wilson, but one generation out of Northern Ireland and but little over a decade removed from an anti-slavery home in the Midwest, became as zealous an advocate of secession and the divine right of man to hold his fellows in bondage as though he had been born and reared in the Old South—truly a startling victory of environment over heredity.

Doctor Wilson was a brilliant, militant war pastor. One Sunday, in lieu of a sermon, he rose and said:

"A great battle is raging today in Virginia, and the



forces of the Confederacy are suffering from a lack of ammunition. This congregation must do its duty, and immediately at the close of these services the ladies will repair to the munitions factory to help with the cartridges. You will now rise and sing the Doxology and be dismissed."

In a nearby pew sat a pale, bespectacled, anæmic lad of nine, gazing at his father in rapt adoration.

The boy was young Thomas Woodrow Wilson.

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*Chapter 3*

TOMMY

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## CHAPTER THREE

### TOMMY

THOMAS WOODROW WILSON HAD A STRANGE AND WISTFUL boyhood.

Tommy, as he was called—never Tom or Thomas—was a delicate, nervous child little interested in the animal activities that absorbed other youngsters. From the care that was lavished upon him, he might have been an only child.

His parents and his sisters, four and six years older, guarded and bossed him as though he had been an invalid. Indeed he almost was. His body was scrawny, his blue eyes appeared doubly large behind a great pair of spectacles, his head, high, wide and long, seemed to sit incongruously upon a thin frame. His mouth and ears were generous. His hair was flaxen.

Such in physical appearance was the boy who lived in the quiet manse of the old First Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia, in the '60's.

From Tommy Wilson's fifth to his tenth year thunderous events were electrifying the world. Their echo scarcely reached him. While other boys were fashioning wooden rifles and proudly boasting that their fathers and uncles and older brothers were "chawing up" incredible numbers of damn Yanks in Virginia, little

Tommy Wilson was daily listening to his father expound the Scriptures and playing dolls with his sisters.

The lad's clearest recollection of the Civil War—one that he was to retain always—came when he peered through the shutters of the manse and saw Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens, under armed convoy, on their way to a Northern prison. He remembered, too, swinging upon the manse gate while ragged men in tattered gray uniforms, some with their feet tied in burlap, streamed past.

The Lost Cause was to mean nothing particularly poignant to Tommy Wilson until he was fourteen. Then, in Columbia, South Carolina, he saw the charred remains of a mile of once stately mansions. They seemed like sockets without eyes. They had been burned by Sherman in the March to the Sea. The memory of those blackened ruins remained always with Tommy Wilson. Subtly they crystallized his born antipathy to war.

Tommy Wilson was a slow bloomer. He was nine before his parents thought him strong enough to learn his letters. It was the stimulus the boy needed. He entered a new and wonderful realm. He became a voracious reader. Books fell before him like ten-pins. Soon he was devouring books far beyond the comprehension of the average lad of ten: "Scottish Chiefs," Plutarch's "Lives," even Shakespeare and thick volumes of collected sermons with which his father's library was filled.

The boy's sudden awakening delighted his father. Dr. Joseph Ruggles Wilson coupled scholarship with godliness. Here was a lad of his own flesh and blood who com-

bined the cherished qualities. The Doctor gave Tommy free rein. Jubilantly, he told cronies: "Tommy actually gets into a pet when his mother and I take away his book and send him to bed at nine o'clock."

Tommy's "pets" and fits of temper were always indulged. He was never punished. There were no rules for Tommy in this otherwise rigid household. "Tommy is just a mischievous bundle of nerves. We mustn't be too hard on him," Janet Woodrow Wilson would remark when a servant reported that the boy's light had been burning long after nine o'clock. Such treatment may have been conducive to peace in the household, but it was poor preparation in discipline for a ten-year-old.

Tommy was the baby of the family until the birth of a brother in 1866. The new arrival was named for his father. No longer was Tommy the family's sole object of watchful guardianship. The lad found compensations. His health improved and he was bitten by the gang instinct. Around the corner was a vacant lot where youngsters played baseball. Tommy joined them. They called themselves the Lightfoots.

Tommy Wilson's association with the Lightfoots is a cherished legend in Augusta. He appeared on the field with a new ball and bat. The ball was vastly superior to the home-made contrivance of yarn and tape the boys had been using. The bat was a shining, polished stick of hickory. Tommy got in the game and he made the rules. He wasn't much of a player but he was a great parliamentarian.

On several occasions, when things were not going to

young Wilson's liking, he seized his bat and ball and stalked off. Some of the boys followed him. He led them into the loft over the manse stable and organized "meetings". The precocious minister's son had gotten hold of Robert's *Rules of Order*. Many years later he was to tell a campaign biographer: "The Lightfoots held meetings characterized by much nicety of parliamentary procedure. Every one of the little chaps knew perfectly well just what the previous question was, and that only two amendments to a resolution could be offered, which should be voted upon in reverse order."

Tommy Wilson, of course, presided over this extraordinary parliament of the urchins. There were no rebels because the authoritative preacher's son allowed no dissenters in the barn. Apparently no lad ever challenged Tommy's leadership or punched him in the nose. Tommy learned early that it is highly useful to know more than the other fellow.

Until he was thirteen Tommy's only tutor was his father. There was a rare bond between father and son. The father had a perfect passion for correct expression. He not only loved words but he liked to clothe his thoughts in exact shadings. He taught the boy to define and master every unfamiliar word that cropped up, then to use the word until it became a flexible instrument.

Almost half a century later Woodrow Wilson, one day in the White House, explained to Newton D. Baker the secret of his astonishing command of English. Mr. Baker thus narrated to this chronicler the President's explanation:

"Dr. Wilson encouraged his son to write essays on every conceivable subject. Once, the President said, he took into his father's study an essay upon which he had labored long. Dr. Wilson read it very slowly, then turned to his son and asked: 'Exactly what did you intend to say in this?' The boy explained. When he had finished the father said: 'Then why not say it?' and, without further words, quietly tore up the manuscript and let it flutter into the wastebasket."

So, in a sense, it was a rather thoroughly trained Tommy Wilson, who, at thirteen, went to school for the first time. He entered Prof. Derry's Academy in Augusta, a small private school. Master Derry emphasized Latin, Greek and mathematics. Young Wilson spent but one term there. His chief recollection of Derry's concerned a day in May, 1870, when the pupils turned out to help Augusta honor General Robert E. Lee. Tommy Wilson looked upon the face of Lee and thrilled from crown to toe. Here, he sensed, was a man almost as god-like as his father.

Later in 1870 the Wilsons moved to Columbia, South Carolina, a city which was to hold their dearest associations. Dr. Wilson was called to teach pastoral and evangelical theology in the famous State Theological Seminary.

In Columbia the Wilsons moved amid a people who were feeling to the full the ruthless aftermath of the war. The flower of their youth had fallen upon the battlefields of Virginia. Their wealth had been dissipated. A vengeful and blind Federal Government had given free



sway to the brutal and ignorant carpetbagger. In the legislature sat these white scalawags and their tools: former slaves, many of them field Negroes, who wore purple shirts, check suits, and gaudy shoes and drank corn liquor out of demijohns as they roared approval of each new measure aimed at their former masters.

In this bewildering, topsy-turvy world there were bold spirits and true among the whites who did not intend to permit their power to crumble. They met secretly and planned a campaign that was to re-establish white supremacy under Governor Wade Hampton in 1876. In that dramatic Red Shirt Movement, so-called, James Woodrow, Tommy Wilson's uncle, was a leader.

Though still a young man, James Woodrow had already carved an impressive career. Professor of natural sciences at Oglethorpe University in Alabama at thirty, he had interrupted his academic career during the war to become chief chemist in the medical department of the Confederacy. James Woodrow was very much of an all-round intellectual. He held fellowships in leading scientific societies of Europe and America. Yet he edited and published two Presbyterian papers and clung firmly to the stern religious tenets of his Calvinist forebears.

He was a Woodrow through and through. It mattered not a whit to him when he found himself, in the '80's, one against a multitude in his uncompromising determination to reconcile the doctrines of Darwin and of Knox. He went down with his head up and his face toward the foe, just as did another Woodrow a generation later.

In Columbia Tommy Wilson came into daily contact with James Woodrow. The uncle had opened a job printing office in connection with the publication of his church papers. At the same time he taught in the State College and was treasurer of the Foreign Missions Board of the Southern Presbyterian Church. No matter what the pressure of work, he would permit no labor on Sunday. Often he would lock his office each Saturday at midnight and re-open at one minute past twelve Monday morning. A contemporary gives us this vivid picture of James Woodrow:

He delegated nothing. He read his own proof; unlocked his own office; taught his own classes; and kept his own missionary books. In his fights for the evolutionary theory, he fought a lone fight also. His enemies surrounded him, baited him, and finally trapped him into delivering an address on the origin of Adam's body.

He lived in Columbia for nearly fifty years, but I doubt if he had a close friend in town. He was too busy for the soft amenities of friendship. He was detached. Not that he was a recluse—he did a full man's part in everything; but he just did not mix with the crowd. He was the most punctual man I ever knew. He never was a minute early or late in keeping an appointment. He lived his life by rule.

You never saw such a dauntless fighter in

causes which he loved. But he fought straight and scorned to win crookedly. In Reconstruction days, when the blacks were in the South Carolina State House piling up taxes on us, we considered for a time defeating them by tampering with the ballots. But Dr. Woodrow said at the meeting: "I am willing to take a gun and help to drive them out, but if you use these tissue ballots I shall make public protest." He was that kind and that way.

This was the man under whose tutelage in Columbia came the callow, gangling, unformed Tommy Wilson. Dr. Woodrow found his nephew something of a mental maverick. He seemed to care not two pins for any branch of science. Once the uncle, seeking to implant some primary principle of chemistry in Tommy's skull, lost patience. "Tommy," he exclaimed, "you can learn if you will! Then, for Heaven's sake, boy, get some of this. At least, if you have no ambition to be a scholar, you might wish to be a gentleman."

Science and mathematics were mostly closed realms to Tommy. In his voluminous later writings and addresses one finds scarcely a reference to science. However, Tommy's mind and that of his Uncle Woodrow met at many points. Time and again the boy surprised and delighted Uncle James by his knowledge of general literature and his enthusiasm for the masters of Latin and Greek.

In Columbia Tommy scuffled, also, through two or

three terms in the highly conventional private school of Prof. Charles Heyward Barnwell. Then, in September, 1873, he went away to college. His father selected a dull, rigorous old Presbyterian institution called Davidson College. Davidson nestled in the foothills of North Carolina. It was conducted along simple lines. The boys had to make their own beds, clean their rooms and fetch their water. Each was given the privilege of planting an elm.

Young Wilson fell in with the regimen perfectly but his stomach couldn't stand the fare. Nervous indigestion gripped him and, in the spring of 1874, he returned home.

Home for the wandering Wilsons was now the manse of the Presbyterian Church in the bustling old seaport of Wilmington, North Carolina. Prof. Joseph Wilson had built a splendid home in Columbia. But when the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington called him back to active preaching, at the handsome salary of \$4,000 a year, he could not resist. The old doctor never felt quite at home out of a pulpit. He loved the feel of an audience.

Wilmington provided a new and fascinating setting for Tommy Wilson.

The boy was now approaching eighteen. Mentally he was mature. Physically he was still below par. Those storms which in mid-teens sweep over the average boy had as yet left him untouched. He had lived in a warm, rich climate where most boys grapple early with the

fierce conflicts of sex awakening. But his environment, his recurring neurasthenia shielded him.

Now, in the ancient North Carolina seaport, Tommy Wilson rubbed an elbow against real life. His walks led him to the waterfront, alive with rough, rude rascals of the seven seas. Some had been blockade runners in the Civil War, slipping past Federal gunboats and landing cargoes of contraband. They had marvelous tales to spin of sudden surprise, attack, flight; of lovely Girls of the Gray who rowed out of the Cape Fear River and safely guided schooners and steamers into hidden coves and inlets.

These tales entranced the pale preacher's son. They struck so responsive a chord that he actually mused dreamily over the possibility of running away to sea. He took John Bellamy into his confidence. John Bellamy was the first real chum that Tommy Wilson had ever known.

John was of Tommy's age and, like the latter, was preparing for college. In knowledge of life young Bellamy was a grown-up in comparison with the virginal Wilson.

Bellamy undertook to remedy his friend's social deficiencies. He introduced Tommy to several cuddly Wilmington belles and trusted to Nature to do the rest. Nature, or rather Tommy Wilson's nature, balked. Once Bellamy fixed up a grand date for Wilson. The latter sat on the edge of his chair for two hours in the family parlor and then fled.

"The trouble with Wilson was that he was a con-

firmed and confounded Calvinist," said John Bellamy many years later.

Young Wilson did not seem shy, merely detached. He did not appear anxious to touch reality too closely. Always he returned to the friendly company of his books. He understood them best. Let us look at the Tommy Wilson of his later 'teens through the friendly and intelligent eyes of David Bryant, Negro butler in the Wilmington household. Bryant's narrative is reported by William Allen White:

When I wanted to find Mr. Tommy in those days, I would go to his room, and generally there he would be sitting with his elbows on his knees and his nose in a book. He had just two friends in those days—John Bellamy and the old Doctor. If he wasn't reading a book with one, he was talking about a book with the other. You never saw a father and son tied together as they were. Why, sometimes I had to wait a meal; the old Doctor would not let me serve until Mr. Tommy came down. And how proud the old Doctor was of the boy—and the boy of him, too! They looked alike except his face was longer. He had the same eyes, the same heavy jaw and teeth, and they favored each other about the nose and cheekbones. But inside—let me put it this way. Outside Mr. Tommy was his father's boy. But inside he was his mother all over. She had Eng-

lish ways—thought she was a little better than other folks—standoffish a little, and folks thought her cold and distant, but it was just that she stuck to her English ways.

She was as gentle and tender-hearted a woman as I ever knew. In those days the land was filled with tramps. She never turned one from the door—black or white—and I have heard her many a time telling the cook to put in a little something extra so if a tramp came there would be plenty for him. Yet she never had many friends. It was her way with people. Tommy inside was like that, good and all that, but he didn't mix up with the other boys—like her, a little standoffish with all the boys but John Bellamy. Sometimes Tommy would work his father so's I could go swimming with him, and the old Doctor would say, "Now, Dave, don't you let Mr. Tommy get into any fights or anything down there." But there was no danger. He wasn't the fighting kind; but his little brother, Mr. Josey—say, there was a real boy!

Dr. Joseph Wilson impressed himself upon Wilmington as he had upon Augusta and Columbia. When he walked down fashionable Third Street, a great-bodied, ruddy-faced man, with a mane of shaggy and graying hair, he seemed a true prince of the church. He loved horses and always possessed a well-matched pair. Once

a parishioner complimented him on the appearance of a horse. "Humph," grunted the Doctor, tartly but with a twinkle in his eye, "the horse probably looks better than I do. I take care of him. My congregation takes care of me."

The Doctor was immoderately fond of "The Pickwick Papers." He quoted them continually. At his table he loved the flow of conversation and the play of wit. He would sit up until any old hour, talking, smoking, occasionally refreshing himself with a tap of good Presbyterian Scotch. The Doctor read his sermons. They were couched in phrases so lofty and polished that one sometimes forgot the conventionality of his theology.

The activities of the Wilson family centered, of course, about the church. Many in Wilmington still hold in memory a picture of Tommy Wilson, tall, pale, bespectacled, escorting his mother to church each Sunday morning. There was assurance and dignity in his bearing, as though verily he walked with the Lord. This young man, observers felt, doubted not that he was one of the elect, a spiritual aristocrat with a secure and certain road to salvation ahead.

At night Tommy Wilson burrowed into books on many and varied subjects: history, philosophy, religious and literary criticism and, particularly, the science of government. He conceived a passion for Gladstone and 18th- and 19th-century leaders of liberal thought in the British Isles.

One morning, after he had sat up reading until the small hours, the boy burst into his father's study.



"Father," he announced triumphantly, "I have found it!" "Found what?" asked Doctor Wilson, blowing a cloud of smoke from his great clay pipe. "That I have a mind, sir. I've found that I have an intellect and a first-class mind!"

The proper incubator, the father thought, for this First-class Mind was Princeton where he, himself, had been a student.

So, in the fall of 1875, Tommy Wilson, three months short of his nineteenth birthday, swung off a train in the gentle New Jersey village that housed the fountainhead of American Presbyterianism. It was to become a fateful and fruitful alliance.

Princeton students were rather serious youngsters, drawn, as was Wilson, from earnest Presbyterian families. The great and kindly philosopher, Dr. McCosh, was president. He believed in giving the boys leeway for individual development. This suited Tommy Wilson perfectly. The quality of his intellect made him a lone wolf. He must browse whither his fancy led.

Though he barely squeezed into the "honor" list of the famous class of '79, graduating forty-first in a class of one hundred twenty-two, the four years at Princeton might well be termed The Making of Tommy Wilson.

Those four years were the happiest of his life. He learned gang comradeship. The applause and admiration of equals was his. At Princeton Tommy Wilson came close to relaxing into a normal, healthy American boy. Nervous and digestive trouble temporarily left him. Red blood raced in his veins. His weight went to

one hundred sixty-five pounds. The musical director discovered that Tommy possessed a tenor voice of some quality and drafted him for the Choral Society and Glee Club.

The young man from North Carolina helped to clear and level farm land for a baseball field. He wasn't good enough to play on the varsity team but managed it for a year.

All the while the youth was speeding the growth of that First-class Mind. The class historian recorded that "Tommy Wilson, upon entering college, rushed to the library and grabbed Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason'." This was probably a bit more epigrammatic than truthful. Yet Tommy's was probably the only freshman mind capable of grappling intelligently with Kant. The intuitive quickness of the Wilson mind is emphasized by his classmate, Robert Bridges, later distinguished editor of *Scribner's Magazine*:

We soon found out that he had an eager mind—a rare quality in a youth of eighteen. He was as keen for the life of the college as any of us; but we soon discovered that what he called "the play of the mind" was as exhilarating to him as the play of the body to athletes. To him this "play of the mind" was the staff of existence. He would trail words or phrases hungrily and they would pop out of his conversation at a club table as part of a joke or a noisy dispute. There was always a

twinkle in his eye, but he knew and you knew that he had scored.

We realized early that he was interested in government, which sounds dull and abstract. But he soon gathered around him a group of fellows who could play the game of hall or club politics with the skill of practised parliamentarians. It was a jest of his in college which ended: "When I meet you in the Senate, I'll argue that out with you."

Young Wilson found chief expression for the "play of his mind" in a literary and debating society called Whig Hall. He was a persuasive debater. His enunciation was clear-cut, with no trace, strange to say, of a Southern accent. At Whig Hall, sides were chosen by lot. Once Wilson was selected to defend the protective tariff. He flatly refused, saying that he would not stultify his belief in free trade. No amount of argument could change his perspective.

"Tommy seemed to have an uncanny sense that he was a man of destiny," recalls a classmate. "Now that I think back to those days, I feel that he was always preparing himself, always looking forward to the time when he might be called to high service. When he walked alone, it was, as he explained, to have opportunity for calm reflection."

Eating with an informal group that called themselves "the Alligators," Wilson would suddenly burst out with a long and brilliant dissertation upon Bismarck, Glad-

stone and other European statesmen. Avidly he explored European and American politics. Night after night he sat in his room, 7 Witherspoon Hall, reading or grinding out sketches and essays on politics and history. Many of these were published in a students' periodical, the *Nassau Literary Magazine*, and have been preserved. They have style, form and power. In somewhat lighter mood, Wilson wrote for *The Princetonian*, which he edited in his senior year.

In his senior year, also, he sold his first article to an outside magazine. The article was called "Cabinet Government in the United States." The purchaser was the *International Review*, of which Henry Cabot Lodge was editor. Who then could dream that the whirl of world events, decades later, would sweep Editor Lodge and his brilliant young Princeton contributor into bitter, rancorous conflict?

"Cabinet Government" represents Tommy Wilson's definite emergence as a writer. With keen, analytic touch the young critic put his finger upon the chief weaknesses of the American form of government: lack of responsible leadership, and the secret committee system of initiating and framing legislation.

The *Review* article was signed not "Thomas W.", but "Woodrow Wilson".

Instinctively, the young author had hit upon an appealing and alliterative writing trademark.

But writing, at this stage, was not the career he had set for himself. Working in him was an idea of getting

## W O O D R O W    W I L S O N

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into politics. In the South, almost without exception, statesmen were lawyers.

So, nearing twenty-three, Woodrow Wilson, no longer Tommy, decided to have a whirl at the law.

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*Chapter 4*

BROADENING

YEARS

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### BROADENING YEARS

THE FALL OF 1879 FOUND WOODROW WILSON A LAW student in the University of Virginia. His preceptor was the celebrated Dr. John Minor.

Seldom had the fine old institution founded by Thomas Jefferson known a sterner taskmaster. Under Minor young Wilson applied himself as never before. He discovered that he was more interested in the popular than in the technical aspects of the law.

Lighter college activities interested him too. He tried pulling a boat and played a little baseball. Phi Kappa Psi tapped him. His voice, which now showed promise in both tenor and baritone parts, at once made him in demand by the Chapel Choir and Glee Club.

Classmates recall that Woodrow was a sight for the gods as he closed his eyes, pointed his nose toward the moon, and swung into "She Sleeps, My Lady Sleeps", "Over the Banister Leans a Face", and "Speed Away". He was carried away, too, by "Marguerite", "The Fox Is on the Hill", "Golden Slippers", "Forsaken", and "Hide Away".

A quaint Southern custom had long obtained at Virginia: when the tender darts of love pierced the breast of a student he would enlist a Glee Club quartet and serenade the light of his life. Wilson entered with gusto



into these romantic forays. One of them came to a sad end when an unappreciative (or waggish) parent cooled the ardor of the singing Romeos with a bucket of water.

The young serenader adored old minstrel songs and had an idea he could write light ditties. An example which will probably never find a place in his collected works is:

'Twas in the gloom by the fair Wyoming  
 That I left my darling many years ago;  
 And memory tender brings her back in splen-  
 dor

With her cheeks of roses and her brow of  
 snow.

But where in thunder is she now, I wonder?

Oh, my soul, be quiet and my sad heart  
 hush—

Under the umbrella of another fellow;

And I think I see her paddling through the  
 slush.

Moonless nights, however, found Wilson deep in his law books or at work on an essay. More and more seriously did he apply himself to his writing. He perfected a method of shorthand, based on Graham's, which no one else could read. This Graham-Wilson system, he found, greatly lessened his labors.

The *University Magazine* soon recognized his ability by publishing his biographical sketches of John Bright and Gladstone. These essays compare favorably with his

later work. Wilson recited them as orations before the Jeffersonian Debating Society, of which he and William Cabell Bruce were the shining stars. Strangely enough, this son of Calvin was awarded a gold medal by the debating society for a defense of the Roman Catholic Church. Boldly did this law student, who at Princeton angrily refused to accept a side not of his choosing, deny that the Roman Church was a menace to American institutions.

The law course at Virginia was not completed. Late in 1880 a racking attack of his old plague, indigestion, necessitated his return to Wilmington. Followed another solitary period in the quiet manse. Wilson continued to read law and browse in his beloved pastures of history and politics.

In May, 1882, he struck out for himself. Edward Ireland Renick, a young Georgia lawyer and friend of his family, offered him a partnership in Atlanta. Wilson accepted and passed his bar examination. He moved his books into a boarding-house room, and the shingle of Renick & Wilson went up at 48 Marietta Street.

Atlanta was the fastest-growing city in the South, a ripe location for a young lawyer. Hoke Smith and other fledgling bucks of the bar were doing a little corporation baiting and stirring up excitement in the courts. They challenged the newcomers to get in the game. Wilson, however, bluntly informed Hoke Smith that he did not approve of the latter's spectacular methods. This was the beginning of animosity which flared into extreme

bitterness many years later when the fiery Hoke represented Georgia in the United States Senate.

Wilson discovered that the law held only academic interest for him. He felt, as he later wrote of Burke, that a lawyer's life would inevitably confine the "roving mind within intolerable limits". Hustling for clients was repugnant to him. Equally distasteful was the rude conviviality of the courthouse corridors. All his life Wilson could not mix. He could not join the laughter over a bawdy story nor put his lips to the flask when it was his turn. Tobacco made him ill. The language of common camaraderie was always foreign to him.

Clients at Renick & Wilson's were chiefly conspicuous by their absence. Day by day and week by week our brilliant young intellectual aristocrat sat in his lonely office. However, he was not one to remain inactive. Inevitably, his "roving mind" turned again to the instrument he knew best: the pen. He decided to develop into a book his *International Review* article on congressional government.

Wilson varied the ennui by frequent visits to Rome, Georgia, where lived his mother's sister, Marion Woodrow, who had married James W. Bones, a merchant.

From one of these visits sprang the great romance of Wilson's life.

The Bones family attended the Brick Presbyterian Church in Rome. The Rev. Samuel Edward Axson was the pastor. At services one Sunday morning the Atlanta lawyer's eye was caught by a beautiful young girl with brown eyes and graceful curls. The sermon held little in-



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### THE WILSON FAMILY IN 1881

*Woodrow Wilson; his sister, Mrs. Howe; his father, the Rev. Dr. Wilson;*

*Mrs. Joseph Wilson, Jr.; and Joseph Wilson, Jr.*



terest for him that day. He could scarcely wait until the congregation had been dismissed to ask his cousins, Mrs. Jessie Bones Brower and Helen Bones, who the fair young maiden was.

"Why, you goose," they laughed, "that's Ellie Lou Axson!"

Then Woodrow remembered a pert little girl who, with her parents, had called many years before at the Wilson home in Augusta.

Ellen Louise Axson was not only the daughter but the granddaughter of Presbyterian ministers. Her forebears were as strictly Calvinistic as the Woodrows. Her mother was dead. Besides managing her father's household efficiently, she played the piano and sketched exceptionally well. Wilson at once set sail in her direction. The Rome cousins furthered the friendship. A naïve account of the young Wilson's method of courtship in the gentle '80's appears in a volume called "A History of Rome and Floyd county, Georgia" by George M. Battley, Jr.:

Mrs. Brower found that she could do her Atlanta cousin a good turn, so proposed that they invite Miss Axson and several others to go on a picnic east of Lindale, to a spring which forms part of the headwaters of Silver Creek. The meeting-place was at the Brower home, and when young Woodrow asked if he hadn't better take some lunch, Miss Ellen Lou readily suggested that she had plenty for two,

and this offer left no room for argument.

The distance was eight or nine miles and two rigs were used. The more attractive of the two for the young folks was Colonel Brower's wagon with side seats, in the body of which plenty of wheat straw had been piled. Woodrow and Ellen Lou chose the back of the wagon that they might dangle their feet behind, and away went the future President of the United States and the Future First Lady of the Land, caring little whether school kept or law business was remunerative or not. After bumping along country roads for an hour and a half they arrived at the picnic ground. Lunch time came and all were summoned to the well-filled baskets. All save two were ravenously hungry after a session of romping and wading. These two were industriously searching for four-leaf clovers on the pasture greensward; playing "Love-me, love-me-not" with flower petals; blowing the downy tops off dandelion stems.

"I wonder where Ellie Lou and Woodrow can be?" asked Mrs. Brower, as if aware of nothing.

"I know," piped one of the children. "He's over there cutting a heart on a birch tree!"

Wilson probably did not proceed quite so fast as this idyllic account would indicate. Nevertheless, he was soon

calling regularly upon the Axson family. The Atlanta visitor made more than a passing impression upon the Rev. Axson, who wrote to his son Stockton, Ellen Lou's younger brother, then away at school: "I can think of nothing that would make me so happy as to have a son like that."

Despite this running start, it was a year before Wilson proposed. Stockton Axson, whose admiration for Wilson was complete, tells the story in a brochure entitled "The Private Life of Woodrow Wilson". This was circulated in 1916 when Wilson's campaign for re-election was seriously embarrassed by a widespread whispering campaign connecting his name with women. Stockton Axson writes:

It was in 1883 that Woodrow Wilson and Ellen Axson became engaged. She was visiting friends in the North Carolina mountains when my father fell seriously ill. He had me summon her home by telegram—my mother had died two years before, and my sister was the responsible member of the family. She went to Asheville to catch a train, but as she had to wait several hours for it she went to a hotel and whiled away the time reading by a window. As fate would have it, Woodrow Wilson, who was driving in the mountains, passed the hotel, chanced to look up, and saw her profile at the window. The two had been together in Rome the previous summer, and it needed just the



unexpected encounter in the North Carolina mountains to show them what life meant for each and for both of them.

Unforgettable for me is the conversation which my sister and I had on the night of her arrival home. In the earlier part of the evening she had been anxious about my father, but when he had at last been made comfortable and had fallen asleep, she joined me in the little sitting room, her dear face flushed, her eyes bright. "Can you keep a secret?" she asked, and upon my intimation that I could, she told me that she was engaged to be married, the manner of the meeting, and her joy. "He is the greatest man in the world," she said, "and the best." In that faith she never faltered in all the years that followed.

Of the many mental pictures which I have of my sister three at this moment stand out with peculiar vividness: the way she looked that night when she told me of her engagement, the way she looked when she held their first-born in her arms, waiting for him to come from a distant place for the first sight of his child, and the way she looked in the little cottage at Princeton the night that he was elected President of the United States.

No date was set for the wedding. Wilson continued plugging away at his writing. An impressive pile of

manuscript mounted in the office of Renick & Wilson. But neither authorship nor the law seemed to offer much prospect of supplying the wherewithal to support a wife. So our young man decided upon a new tack. He closed his law office and, in September, 1883, entered the new Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Johns Hopkins was a very incubator of scholarship and of stimulating research. Wilson's courses in history were guided by Prof. Herbert B. Adams and his studies in economics by Richard T. Ely, a noted liberal. Adams had recently returned from Germany. He gathered about him a remarkable group of young men of whom the world was to hear much. Among them were Albert Shaw, John Dewey, Frederic J. Turner, James Franklin Jameson and Albion W. Small. All were men of maturity and serious purpose. There was no "college spirit" such as Wilson had known at Princeton and Virginia. Wilson varied the monotony of the grind by running over to New York occasionally for a few hours with Ellen Lou Axson, who had come north to study painting at the Art Students' League.

In 1885 our slow-blooming scholar won his Ph.D. degree. He was now Doctor Wilson. At the same time was published the book upon which he had worked for six years. "Congressional Government, A Study of American Politics" was a remarkable exposition of the weaknesses in our Federal Government. It clearly revealed the futility and unworkability of the system of checks and balances set up by the Founders. Although Wilson had not yet followed his theories to their logical

conclusion by suggesting a cabinet form of government along British lines, the volume at once attracted wide attention.

Bryn Mawr College, recently opened in the suburbs of Philadelphia, had a very alert and talent-seeking dean in the person of Miss Thomas. She offered Wilson a post as associate professor of history and political science. Bryn Mawr was a woman's college. Its faculty contained so many Johns Hopkins men that it was jokingly referred to as "Johanna Hopkins." Wilson accepted.

At last it was possible for him to marry Ellen Axson. On June 24, 1885, a small party gathered in the manse of the Independent Presbyterian Church in Savannah, Georgia, of which Ellen Axson's grandfather was pastor. The bridegroom's father and the bride's grandfather jointly conducted the wedding ceremony. There was one enlivening incident.

"I remember," recalls Stockton Axson, "how Woodrow Wilson and I chatted about the books in my grandfather's bookcases while we waited for the bride to come downstairs. I also remember a less idyllic circumstance, how bliss was jarred and the scent of orange blossoms temporarily annulled while two small boys, the bridegroom's nephew, Wilson Howe, and the bride's brother, Edward Axson, 'mixed it up' in a gorgeous fight over some difference in boyish opinions. The bride was much shocked; but I caught a twinkle in the bridegroom's eye which seemed to say, 'Let's separate them but don't let's be in too desperate haste about it'."



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ELLEN LOUISE AXSON  
*First Wife of Woodrow Wilson.*



The honeymoon was spent walking and bicycling and idling in the North Carolina mountains where their vows had been pledged two years before.

In the fall the Wilsons went to live in what had been the parsonage of the little Baptist Church in the village of Main Line, between Philadelphia and Bryn Mawr. It was not many miles from the scene of Grandfather Jimmy Wilson's peppery activities three-quarters of a century before.

Let's have a look at our scholarly bridegroom as he takes up the task of teaching the science of government to young ladies. He is almost twenty-nine. He wears a drooping moustache over which the young ladies titter a little and which his young wife soon persuades him to discard. His hair is plentiful and has darkened into brown. An inch or two over medium height, his long legs and short body give him an appearance of being slightly out of proportion. He has the typical long horse face of men from the north of Ireland. With his big ears, jutting jaw, large, rather sensuous mouth, he seems at first flush an exceptionally homely person. Yet the upper face, with its fine nose, eyes and mouth, redeems him.

If his countenance evoked mixed emotions, there was nothing indefinite about the Wilson charm. He was witty and quick; his smile could chase the dour lines from his face. In a classroom or privately, he was a most persuasive talker. Words and combinations of words were his lute. He had the rare gift of illuminating dull subjects through imagery and phrasing.

Although the young women seemed to enjoy his lec-

tures, Wilson did not like Bryn Mawr. He said merely that the "social advantages were inadequate" but never explained further.

In 1888 he accepted with alacrity an offer to teach history and political economy at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut. He took with him the uncompleted manuscript of a second book, "The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics".

Wesleyan was one of the old educational institutions of New England, rich in achievement and tradition. While nominally under Methodist influence, the university was advanced and liberal. It was co-educational. However, the male students outnumbered the female more than twenty to one.

Wilson was quickly at home in Middletown. He revived his interest in oratory and athletics. He organized the House of Commons, a debating society. "Professor Wilson," asserts the *Wesleyan Alumnus*, "put new life into the practice of debate. As he put it: 'To argue on any side without the basis of conviction is mental suicide.' On his arrival at Middletown, Prof. Wilson was made one of three members of the Wesleyan Football Association, serving throughout the weeks of fall practice as one of the coaches, assisting the captain in devising new plays."

Wilson did no field coaching but helped to work out on the blackboard quick line plunges, double crisscross passes, the contracted rush line and other innovations. As a result, the team became one of the most formidable in the East. In 1889 Wesleyan defeated Amherst, Wil-

liams, Rutgers, Trinity and the University of Pennsylvania. The last game of the season was played against Lehigh at Hampden Park, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Rivalry was intense, for it was reported that, in the event of victory, Lehigh would demand Wesleyan's place in the old Intercollegiate Football Association, which included Harvard, Pennsylvania, Princeton, Yale and Wesleyan.

Coach Wilson played a big part in that game. Let the Wesleyan graduate organ tell the story:

The day of the game brought a hard storm and the battle was fought in a sea of mud. The Lehigh team developed altogether unexpected strength and the game was going their way. Twice Lehigh scored easy touchdowns and it seemed as though Wesleyan faced certain defeat. Then suddenly, from the Wesleyan bleachers, a man walked out in front clad in heavy rubber boots and a raincoat. He shouted to the Wesleyan contingent, reproaching them for not cheering for their team, and at once began to lead them in the Wesleyan yell, beating time for them with his umbrella. He continued this violently until the Wesleyan cheers heartened Slayback's men in spite of their handicap and the tide of the game turned for two touchdowns as Peck, McDonald, Slayback and Hall crashed into the Brown and White line and tied the score.



After the game the Lehigh players, inquiring about the magnetic cheer-leader, were informed that he was Wesleyan's professor of history, Dr. Woodrow Wilson.

At Wesleyan life ran very smoothly for the Wilsons. They lived in a white house on beautiful High Street. It was gay with the laughter of two baby girls. The lovely, tactful Ellen Axson created a warmer home atmosphere than Wilson had ever known. She filled the house with youth and gaiety. Subtly she overcame the dour Woodrow temperament. She was his long-needed balance wheel. Indeed, one may trace to this splendid, self-effacing woman every forward move in the rising curve of Woodrow Wilson's career.

The young professor's fame spread and he was soon in demand as a lecturer. Proudly, a little shyly, he related some of his early triumphs in long, intimate letters to his father. On January 13, 1889, he gave "My Precious Father" a description of a lecturing excursion to Rhode Island:

"Your letter came while I was away on a thirty-hour trip to Providence, R. I., whither I went to deliver a lecture [under the auspices of the Historical and Economic Association of Brown University] on 'Systems of City Organization'. I send you the best newspaper report. The first part [about a column] is all right—that I had written out and the reporter copied most of the sentences. Much of the rest is wrong, some of it absurdly wrong. But you can get an idea of what I talked about

in general. I was extremely well received and think that I can say that I made a decided hit. After the lecture Colonel Goddard, who introduced me, and who is one of the richest men in an extremely rich town, as well as a man of sense and of cultivated taste, took me to his house and entertained me most handsomely. He tried to make me believe, by almost every turn of his conversation, that I was quite a distinguished man. I came home so puffed up that I could hardly condescend to speak even to my own family! I lecture there again next Friday on the government of Berlin—a model government in its kind.”

Next year found him lecturing at Johns Hopkins. In the spring of 1890 Princeton asked him to return and teach political science. His title would be Professor of Jurisprudence. It was the final accolade.

After eleven varied and vital years, Doctor Woodrow Wilson was back in the cloistered halls that Tommy Wilson had so gayly trod.



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*Chapter 5*

PRINCETON

TRIUMPHS

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### PRINCETON TRIUMPHS

WOODROW WILSON RETURNED TO A NEW AND DIFFERENT Princeton.

During his undergraduate days the college had been in the grip of tradition. Students were trained in the classics, a modicum of mathematics and rigorous Scotch theology. Frugality and piety were the watchwords.

Monitors routed the boys out of bed at sunrise and herded them into chapel. Their souls must be bathed in the holy aura of Jonathan Edwards and the good Dr. John Witherspoon before they were permitted to dip their hungry spoons into morning porridge. Indeed, the atmosphere had changed little since William Tennent and his three astonishing preacher sons in 1746 began training zealous Presbyterian youths to carry the faith into the wilderness.

Now, in 1890, the monastic setting was gone. A wealthier and more worldly America was pushing in. Alumni, grown rich, furnished funds to erect new buildings and found laboratories. Science gained a foothold. Men now sent their sons to Princeton not primarily to become teachers and preachers, but to obtain a rounded education and those social qualities vaguely encompassed in the term "gentleman".

"After 1888," points out Professor William E. Dodd,

in "Woodrow Wilson and His Work", the change took on an amazing pace.

"Beautiful buildings adorned the campus. The professors increased in number and assumed the manners of men of the world, even if their salaries did remain meagre. The students, instead of chopping their own firewood and bringing water from the nearest wells, united in clubs, built themselves luxurious clubhouses, employed the best of servants, and dined in the manner of gentlemen who knew the good things of life. Instead of the dog-eared Greek and Latin texts of their primitive predecessors handed down from generation to generation, they found excellent tutors who could, for a consideration, drill enough of the wicked classics into their easygoing heads to enable them to pass examinations and take the coveted degree at the ends of their stipulated periods of study. As a certain lady patron of the University was wont to say, 'Princeton was a delightfully aristocratic place.'"

Into this rapidly altering Princeton stepped Woodrow Wilson, professor of political science. His tread was assured. The jaded young men of the upper classes were quick to perceive that here was no stodgy pedant. More than two-thirds of those who had the right of choice flocked to his courses. They listened to vivid and glowing lectures, such as they had never heard before, on men and movements in politics and history. Wilson had something to say and said it in a fascinating manner.

These were indeed stimulating years.

Four times the senior class elected him the most popu-

lar member of the faculty. Such triumphs seemed to lengthen his stride. There was a new certainty about him. As in the case of his marriage, knitting him together as a man, the students' applause, instead of turning his head, spurred him on. Like all sensitive natures, he needed the stimulus of appreciation.

Books and essays began pouring in copious stream from his pen. Greater, too, was their success. Soon the more dignified reviews and magazines sought his work.

In 1893 Wilson published a slender volume of history called "Division and Reunion". This set up the premise that the United States had not really become a nation until 1865, since it had never been united. It had required the decisive defeat of the South, the author contended, to decide the question of sovereignty. He bolstered his position with Gladstone's famous dictum: "Until a people thinks its government national, it is not national."

Though this was relatively a simple conclusion, Wilson was the first to formulate it historically. He had distilled the idea out of long years of reading and reflective thought. He had reached a point where he could take the ideas of others and carry them a step forward. Always his cool and concise mind was weighing and balancing, rejecting and approving. This led him, by natural development, into the field of criticism.

"Mere Literature", a collection of arresting essays, which appeared also in 1893, was an example. One essay, "A Calendar of Great Americans", particularly stands out. Alexander Hamilton, Wilson wrote, was



more of a European than an American. His portrait of Jefferson was inept. Washington was merely a paragon of virtue. Lincoln alone he portrayed as a great human figure.

Later, 1896, Wilson published a full-length biography of Washington. Here the young historian failed to produce a notable volume. Although the style is graceful and flowing, Wilson's Washington is too good to be true. There is no adequate analysis of Washington's contemporary, Thomas Jefferson, and little of that understanding of Jefferson's penetrating reforms which one would look for in a former student of the University of Virginia. In fact, from the tone in which the book is written, the worshipful author might have been Washington's valet.

Wilson's essays on politics and government showed that he had absorbed the writings and thought of Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, John Stuart Mill, Walter Bagehot and Sydney Smith. He frequently drew upon these authorities in support of his contention that the British government is more flexible and workable than the American system. Again and again he stressed the need for responsible leadership in his own country. This was the central theme of his political criticism.

Leading a cloistered life amid his adoring family and students, Wilson was out of touch with the social and economic forces that were stirring the country. Writing books out of books, polishing theories into beautiful English, young Professor Wilson remained undisturbed by the swirl of outside events.

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He appeared blandly unconscious of the fact that buccaneers of big business and finance were furnishing responsible leadership, of a sort. Nor did he see that the real rulers of the country depended upon divided authority in government—the system of checks and balances which he deplored—for their continual and persistent thwarting of popular movements. As a reformer, in those days Wilson was highly impractical.

By now there were additions to the family circle. A third child, another baby daughter, had been born. Stockton Axson, who joined the family at Wesleyan, transferred with it to Princeton, where he taught English literature. Cousin Helen Bones came from Georgia to attend a nearby school for young ladies.

Meanwhile Wilson's mother, Janet Woodrow, had died and been laid to rest in the old Presbyterian churchyard in Columbia, South Carolina. Her death left Dr. Joseph Ruggles Wilson a lonely old man. Battered and worn by many years of preaching and teaching, he retired and joined his favorite son.

They all lived together in a cottage which had been made into an artistic retreat by Ellen Axson Wilson. Though it was somewhat crowded and there was no money for luxuries, she kept things jolly. Despite her burdens, this remarkable wife and mother found time for her painting and music.

Old Doctor Wilson was still inordinately fond of good talk. Afternoons, the three men of the household would gather in Professor Wilson's book-filled den and discuss everything under the sun, while Doctor Wilson

and Axson puffed away at their pipes and Woodrow walked the floor. Many an evening found the family grouped about the piano singing the old songs they loved so well. Often, too, Wilson would read from his favorite prose writers or Mrs. Wilson would call from memory passages from her beloved Wordsworth and Browning.

In spite of this ideal home life, Wilson seldom relaxed. He drove himself too hard. His college activities, his prodigious writing and lecturing sapped his strength. The spring of 1896 found him heading for a nervous breakdown. The always thoughtful Ellen Axson felt that a change was needed and packed him off alone for a bicycle trip through England and Scotland.

On that trip Wilson fought out a problem. As he pedaled along, taking counsel only with himself, he realized how weary he had become of the college routine. He yearned for action.

Upon his return the family found him physically invigorated but mentally restless. No longer was there any zest for the afternoon sessions in the den. Old Doctor Wilson, quick to notice the change, remarked: "Something has come over Woodrow. He can't sit down happily and talk as he used to." Stockton Axson recalls that Wilson often cried out, as though in agony of spirit: "I'm so tired of a merely talking profession. I want to do something."

A couple of months after his return opportunity came to stir up something positive. In October, 1896, Princeton College was formally christened Princeton Uni-



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PRESIDENT WILSON, MRS. WILSON AND THEIR THREE DAUGHTERS  
*This photograph was taken when Woodrow Wilson was president of Princeton.*



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versity. Wilson was selected to make an address on behalf of the faculty. It was to be a memorable occasion.

The pent-up Wilson found vent for the outlet he had been seeking. For many nights the light burned late in his study. He worked upon this address as he had never worked before. When the day came he stepped upon the platform, a man of action.

Vigorously and forcefully he outlined his views on college education. He demanded that the colleges emphasize the things of the spirit.

Excerpts from this notable address show clearly the trend and quality of Wilson's thought at forty:

Religion is the salt of the earth wherewith to keep both duty and learning sweet against the taint of time and change; the catholic study of the world's literature as a record of the spirit is the right preparation for leadership in the world's affairs. You do not know the world until you have known the men who have possessed it and tried its ways before ever you were given your brief run upon it; the cultured mind cannot complain, it cannot trifle, it cannot despair. Leave pessimism to the uncultured who do not know the reasonableness of hope. . . .

I am much mistaken if the scientific spirit of the age is not doing us a great disservice, working in us a certain great degeneracy. Science has transformed the world and owes

little debt of obligation to any past age. It has driven mystery out of the universe. Science teaches us to believe in the present and in the future more than in the past, to deem the newest theory of society the likeliest. It has given us agnosticism in the realm of philosophy and scientific anarchy in the field of politics. . . .

We must make the humanities human again; we must recall what manner of men we are. It has been Princeton's work, in all ordinary seasons, not to change but to strengthen society, to give not yeast but bread for the raising; the business of the world is not individual success, but its own betterment, strengthening, and growth in spiritual insight. There is laid upon us the compulsion of the national life. We dare not keep aloof and closet ourselves while a nation comes to its maturity.

The challenging address aroused country-wide interest among educators. It was reprinted in full by Walter Hines Page, editor of *The Forum*. Page, also a native of Virginia, was an early admirer of Wilson.

This speech came at a psychological time, a time of change and flux of thought—political, economic, educational. William Jennings Bryan was turning the political philosophy of the country topsy-turvy. Thoughtful men were concerned over the growing evils of monopoly in industry. All the larger colleges were witnessing the

swift and ruthless encroachment of science upon the classics. Everywhere, men in and out of the universities feared the rising specter of Socialism.

Wilson's notable defense of the humanities, as against the sciences, added many cubits to his fame. From this moment, his own college realized that it had in him a man of commanding stature, destined for higher goals.

No one was prouder of Wilson than his father. The old Doctor, now in his mid-seventies, grew restless and wandered back south to revisit old scenes. As he felt himself growing feebler he returned to Wilmington and lived in a boarding house, attended by his faithful old Negro servant, David Bryant. One afternoon, Bryant recounts, the Doctor talked more than usual about his eldest son.

"Dave," he said, "Mr. Tommy is a smart man, one of the smartest men in this country."

David Bryant nodded agreement.

"Let me tell you something, Dave," continued the old gentleman. "One of these days Mr. Tommy will be a candidate for the presidency of the United States. I won't be here, Dave, but you will. Are you still voting, Dave?"

Dave said he was.

"Well, promise me this, Dave: when I am gone and Mr. Tommy is running for President, you will go down to the polls and put in my vote—not yours but mine!"

Dave says he did.

Soon after this surprising prophecy Woodrow Wilson came to Wilmington to take his father north. The old



gentleman felt it would be his last journey and was loath to go. He was somewhat reconciled when Dave Bryant promised to go with him. But Wilson, realizing that a trained nurse would be necessary, quietly instructed Dave to miss the train. Although Dave was never again a member of the household, Wilson always kept up with him and sent him gifts.

Meanwhile, as Wilson sat at his desk toiling over a five-volume "History of the American People", the trustees of Princeton were also laboring with a problem.

The Rev. Dr. Francis L. Patton, who had been president since 1888, was aging and must soon retire. Since his remarkable dedication address of 1896, sentiment for the selection of Wilson had steadily grown. The student body, almost to a man, and many members of the faculty openly clamored for him. In universities, as in politics or any other field where human beings contest for priority, there is plenty of wire-pulling. Wilson's lack of demonstrated talent as an executive was a drawback. Also, he was a layman. Hitherto, all Princeton presidents had been recruited from the clergy.

The fact that he was a layman gradually operated in Wilson's favor. Many of the alumni were eager to erase the impression that Princeton was strictly sectarian. As a matter of fact, the college had never been closed to students of creeds other than Presbyterian.

In 1899 Yale broke its traditional precedent by selecting as president Prof. Hadley, a layman. This paved the way, and in 1902 Woodrow Wilson was unanimously elected president of Princeton University.

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Now at last, at forty-six, Woodrow Wilson was free to go into action.

He seized the opportunity.

The manner and method was to affect, profoundly, the university, Wilson's career, and the destiny of his country.





## CHAPTER SIX

### WARFARE AT PRINCETON

WOODROW WILSON LEFT LITTLE TIME FOR DOUBT THAT Princeton now had a militant master.

He ascended the platform, straight and firm, for his inaugural address on October 22, 1902, a memorable occasion. Here was a moment for which he had long been prepared. There was no fleck of hesitancy as he declaimed his vision and dream of a new, revived Princeton.

"Princeton for the Nation's Service" was his text. He pleaded for stricter standards of scholarship and the training of an educated class, able and eager to grapple with the problems of life.

"The college," he exclaimed, "is for the minority who plan, who conceive and mediate between social groups and must see the wide stage whole. We must deal with the spirits of men, not with their fortunes. The man who has not some surplus of thought and energy to expend outside the narrow circle of his own task and interest is a dwarfed, uneducated man."

Never before had Wilson expressed himself so decisively nor shown more powerfully that oratorical charm of which he was past master. He virtually magnetized a gala gathering. In this great audience were some men who were to play profound parts in the

Wilson drama. Grover Cleveland, who had come to Princeton to live following his retirement from the White House in 1897, sat with his fellow trustee, Moses Taylor Pyne, immensely wealthy New York financier and lavish Princeton benefactor.

Close to the rostrum loomed the awesome figure of the elder J. Pierpont Morgan, attended by Harry Harper and George Harvey, executives of Harper & Brothers, a publishing house backed by Morgan. Here, too, were seated Mark Twain, Robert Lincoln, Richard Watson Gilder, George Armour, Robert Bridges, Walter Hines Page, former Speaker Thomas B. Reed, one-time Czar of Congress, and a host of other illustrious alumni and guests.

Many came curious to see what manner of man this new president of Princeton was. All left if not bewitched at least deeply impressed that here was the man whom Princeton, indeed the entire college world, had long needed.

Wilson moved at once to test the power of his prestige. He demanded the exclusive privilege of appointment and removal of all faculty members. The benumbed trustees, with hardly a murmur, conceded this right which had been theirs from time immemorial.

Assured now of complete authority, Wilson set out to use it. He stiffened and enlarged scholastic requirements, so much so that at the end of the year more than a hundred of the thirteen hundred students were flunked out and sent home. Although parents protested and the loss in fees was considerable Wilson did not relent.

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"Some day," he said, "I hope there will be an enthusiasm for learning in Princeton," and proceeded to revise and reform the courses of study to make them still more rigorous.

As early as 1904 Wilson was taking an abstract interest in politics. In that year, as a matter of fact, certain powerful Eastern financiers, alarmed over the continuing threat of William J. Bryan, even considered Wilson as a possible presidential candidate of the Democratic party. One spring evening Wilson was invited to the New York home of Dr. John A. Wyeth, president of the Southern Society, where he met Thomas Fortune Ryan and William M. Laffan. Ryan was one of the boldest and most unscrupulous of financiers and political manipulators. Laffan, publisher of the *New York Sun*, was a confidant of J. P. Morgan.

The conference was unproductive. Wilson, who could sway from a platform, was never at his best at close quarters. Though his conservative views were satisfactory, his personality failed to impress Ryan and Laffan. The episode is related by Edward P. Mitchell, for half a century a *Sun* writer and editor, in his absorbing "Memoirs of an Editor."

The meeting evidently made some impression upon Wilson, for a few days later he asked a classmate, now a member of the board of trustees, what his duty to Princeton would be if high political preferment came his way.

Late in November, 1904, when the Democrats of the nation were stunned and discouraged by the tremendous

defeat of Alton B. Parker by Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson addressed the Virginia Society of New York. Speaking as an Independent Democrat, he declared the party bankrupt in leadership. William J. Bryan, he asserted, was "not entitled, intellectually, to the immense power he wielded". The audience waved napkins and leaped upon chairs to shout approval.

The same year Wilson proposed at Princeton another sweeping reform in methods of study. This became known as the preceptorial system. The president asked permission to engage some forty young doctors of philosophy who would be ranked as associate professors. These young men would live in the dormitories and direct the reading and studies of the students. The cost would be \$100,000 a year or, if the scheme were to become permanent, would require an endowment of \$2,000,000.

The plan was put through without opposition. Cleveland H. Dodge, Moses Taylor Pyne, Cyrus H. McCormick, David B. Jones and other wealthy alumni caught Wilson's vision and contributed liberally. At that time Princeton men adopted as their proud motto: "Wilson is Princeton's greatest asset." They rather enjoyed the swirl of publicity that followed each of the president's numerous public utterances.

It warmed them when Wilson made the front pages with such expressions as: "You know that the pupils in the colleges in the last several decades have not been educated. You know that with all our teaching we train nobody; you know that with all our instructing we



educate nobody. . . . We are upon the eve of a period when we are going to set up standards. We are upon the eve of a period of synthesis when, tired of this dispersion and standardless analysis, we are going to put things together in a connected and thought-out scheme of endeavor."

Flattering appreciation of Wilson's educational innovations came in the form of a dinner tendered him by the Lotos Club in New York on February 3, 1906. This purely complimentary occasion took a more significant turn when Col. George Harvey, proprietor of *Harper's Weekly*, rose and drawled: "As one of a considerable number of Democrats who have grown tired of voting Republican tickets, it is with a feeling almost of rapture that I occasionally contemplate even a remote possibility of casting a ballot for the president of Princeton University to become President of the United States. In any case, since opportunities in national conventions are rare and usually preëmpted, to the enlightened and enlightening Lotos Club I make the nomination."

Though these remarks were apparently delivered off-hand, Harvey's eye had been on Wilson ever since he had heard the latter's inaugural address in 1902. Wilson was not a little pleased and that very night wrote Harvey from the University Club: "Before I go to bed tonight I must express to you, simply but most warmly, my thanks for the remarks you made at the Lotos dinner. It was most delightful to have such thoughts uttered about me, whether they were deserved or not, and I thank you with all my heart."

Wilson went back to Princeton and plunged at once into one of his most revolutionary reforms.

In the place of fraternities, which were banned, fashionable eating clubs had grown up at Princeton. Membership was confined to less than half of the two upper classes. Each club was a clique in itself. It owned its own property, employed a staff of servants and by its very form fostered snobbery.

Freshmen and sophomores eagerly sought to place themselves in line for election to these exclusive clubs. "Bicker Week", when the campaign was on, was a period of hope and heartburning. Many unsuccessful candidates left college. The whole spirit of the university was infected by the club evil. "The side show," said Wilson, "is seeking to run the main tent. I won't be president of a country club."

Wilson now formulated and submitted to the trustees a plan for the "Social Reorganization of Princeton". This plan contemplated the abolition, root and branch, of the clubs. The president proposed the substitution of what became known as the Quadrangle or Quad system. He would build new and modern dormitories, grouped about a main quadrangle, where class lines and social distinctions would be abolished.

Now came warfare.

Wilson's plans brought him into sharp collision with the one member of his faculty who was not subject to his complete authority. This was Andrew F. West, for ten years dean of Princeton's embryo Graduate School. West had held his title since 1896, meanwhile teaching

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Latin in the university. It was the dream of his life to head an institution that would perpetuate the classics. Nothing save the lack of the financial wherewithal held him back.

Repeated assurances had been given Dean West that funds for his faculty and necessary buildings would be supplied, but they had not materialized. In the first year of Wilson's administration West had been sent to Europe to study and adapt the best features of graduate schools in England, Germany and elsewhere. Upon his return he wrote a glowing prospectus which Wilson endorsed in a signed foreword. The two often had campaigned for funds from the same platform.

Gradually, though, there grew up a rivalry. West felt that Wilson was determined to push aside the Graduate School. Wilson came to feel that West was attempting to build a college outside the university. The two were temperamental opposites. West was a huge man, with a great booming voice, and hearty manner, and a lover of the good things of life. He it was who induced Grover Cleveland to come to Princeton. Cleveland named his residence "Westland" in honor of his friend. Night after night Cleveland and West foregathered to play billiards, talk fishing and enjoy robust comradeship. Wilson would have been a hopeless outsider at such sessions.

By 1906 the two executives were openly unfriendly. In that year Dean West was offered the presidency of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at double the salary he was receiving at Princeton. He consulted his

chum, Cleveland, who was chairman of the trustees' standing committee on the Graduate School. In a memorandum for Cleveland's latest biographer, Allan Nevins, Dean West describes the course of events:

A meeting of the trustees' committee was held. Mr. Cleveland presided and President Wilson was present. I told the committee in President Wilson's presence that I was discouraged by the failure to obtain the graduate college and by the increasingly unfriendly attitude of President Wilson toward me personally. President Wilson then said, "I challenge you to give any instance of this." I detailed a number of instances and then asked him to say whether he thought anything I had said was unfair or untrue. His only reply was: "I must say you have a remarkable memory." I then said that as I now had an honorable opportunity to leave and undertake a new work, I was inclined to do so. I was asked to retire from the meeting until the committee had deliberated on the matter. When I returned, Mr. Cleveland as chairman announced that, "speaking for everyone in this room," as he said, they strongly wished me to remain, and would pledge their active support in my efforts to obtain the graduate college. I thanked them, and asked President Wilson if he fully concurred in this. He replied: "Of course I

do. How could you doubt it?" . . . Relying on this, I remained in Princeton.

In the following June [1907] President Wilson surprised and startled the board of trustees by proposing the adoption of his "Quad" plan calling for a sweeping rearrangement of the undergraduates' residential life and necessitating a very large financial expenditure, thereby displacing the graduate college from its priority of opportunity and perhaps postponing it indefinitely. Mr. Cleveland strongly opposed the "Quad" plan, and told me that he had told President Wilson that it was not keeping faith with the assurance given to me.

Unwaveringly, Wilson continued to press his Quad plan and broke not only with Cleveland but with the equally influential Moses Taylor Pyne. In his blunt, explosive fashion Cleveland said of the scheme: "It all sounds very pretty but what does it mean?" One afternoon Wilson called on Cleveland. The ex-President told Mrs. Cleveland that he was "going to talk United States" to Wilson. Allan Nevins describes the meeting:

Wilson came and stayed for two hours. When he left, Cleveland remarked to his family: "I guess he knows where I stand now. I was as emphatic to him as the English language permits." But that evening Professor John Grier

Hibben dropped in. He had just seen Wilson. "Do you know what he said?" he asked Cleveland. "He said he had called on you this afternoon. 'And,' he said, 'I think I have virtually won Mr. Cleveland over to my side!'" Cleveland looked at Dr. Hibben a moment in consternation. Then he said slowly and emphatically: "It's a d—d lie!"

In the end he was convinced that Wilson had shown bad faith. Wilson, for his part, was convinced that Cleveland had failed him in a sound and progressive cause. . . . In the campaign of 1912 it was said by Wilson's enemies that Cleveland had written a letter denouncing Wilson, and phrases from this alleged letter were even quoted. But Cleveland's immediate family do not believe that any such letter was ever penned.

Wavering for the first time in its support of the president, the board of trustees, in the fall of 1907, asked Wilson to withdraw the Quad plan. Wilson acceded but said stiffly that he would soon beg leave to bring forward the project again. Wilson's nature was such that any thwarting of his schemes completely upset his nervous system. Again it was necessary for his wife, the wise Ellen Axson, to prescribe a change. She bundled him off alone with his problems and troubles to Bermuda.

Here he met a woman who for seven years was to

move through his life with grace and charm. She was Mary Hulbert Peck, wife of Thomas B. Peck, a substantial business man of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. With a young son by a previous marriage, Allen Hulbert, she occupied a winter cottage framed in roses and oleanders. Everybody in Bermuda knew and liked this gay and whimsical young matron, who was infinitely feminine, with an arch, roguish way of inviting and reciprocating confidences.

In the years of his budding maturity Woodrow Wilson had described his ideal woman as possessing, in addition to beauty, "a most lively and stimulating wit; such a mind as we most desire to see in woman—a mind that stirs without irritating you, that rouses yet does not belabor, amuses yet subtly instructs."

Wilson might have written that description of Mary Peck, so closely did she approach the reality.

At first, in silence, they strolled the sands. She, detecting beneath his mute austerity a shyness, sought to draw him out—at which she was adept. It was no easy task, but once the flood-gates opened Wilson eloquently poured out his hopes, his aims and woes. How well she understands me, he thought. And she, who had at first considered Wilson merely an amusing new "find", listened and became fascinated. The ardent account of his dreams for the world thrilled her.

Elated by her encouragement, Wilson wrote glowing letters home about the charming Mrs. Peck. This haphazard vacation friendship was to deepen and mature as the years went on. Mrs. Peck was often to be a guest of

the Wilsons, and they visited her. They all exchanged gifts.

During the long period that Mrs. Peck was part of the Wilson picture he wrote her hundreds of letters. Unfortunately for the enemies who later barked at Wilson's heels, these missives give no evidence of deep personal passion. In fact, perhaps the most burning phrase is: "I long to look into your eyes tonight and talk with you." Although there was no concealment in the friendship, Mary Peck was eventually destroyed by the tongue of scandal. That, though, is a later story.

Meanwhile Wilson forgot that he was sick and went back to Princeton, recovered, to renew the battle for his Quad plan. Ensued a two-year knock-down and drag-out fight. In the fires of that ruthless struggle his stubborn, unyielding qualities manifested themselves as they never had before. He gave and received wounds that never healed. His enemies became the enemies of Princeton, *ergo* the enemies of democracy. He detected not the slightest merit in the opposition contention that the university must keep its pledge to Dean West and the Graduate School before it spent millions in abolishing the fashionable clubs and substituting Wilson's untested Quad project.

The quarrel flared into the open on May 10, 1909, when William C. Procter, a millionaire soap manufacturer of Cincinnati, Ohio, offered \$500,000 for the erection of a graduate college, contingent upon the raising by the university of an additional half-million. Procter



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stipulated that Dean West was to have sole power to select the site.

Wilson sprang to the attack. He declared that the Graduate School must be located near the center of Princeton, else it would become an entirely unrelated institution. West's friends insisted that Wilson was carping. Wilson went to Cincinnati and pressed his position upon Mr. Procter, who refused to budge.

Wilson then flamed out with the charge that wealth was seeking to dominate Princeton. Late in December he wrote to Moses Pyne, who had succeeded Grover Cleveland as chairman of the graduate school committee: "I am not willing to be further drawn into the toils. I cannot accede to the acceptance of gifts which take the educational policy of the university out of the hands of the trustees and faculty, and permit it to be determined by those who give money."

It was an artful argument. For almost a generation the evils of predatory wealth had been dinned into the ears of the people by reformers, social and political. Wilson was hailed as the counterpart, in the colleges, of Theodore Roosevelt. Mr. Procter did not at all relish the position in which he found himself. He suddenly withdrew his offer.

To the country at large Wilson was the hero of the day. The newspapers portrayed him as the college president who had refused a million dollars. The Princeton alumni, however, who yearly were called upon to meet increasing deficits, felt they had lost a million. Many denounced Wilson as an autocrat whose vanity and per-

sonal jealousy of Dean West were sacrificing the best interests of the university. The students and members of the faculty took up the cudgels. Professors Henry Van Dyke and John G. Hibben broke from their moorings and attacked Wilson at seething alumni meetings in Philadelphia and Montclair, New Jersey.

The kindly but relentless Pyne took command of the anti-Wilson forces and persuaded Procter to renew his offer. The backfire worried Wilson. A single vote in the board of trustees might turn the tide. There was a vacancy upon the board. Wilson's enemies nominated Adrian H. Joline, New York corporation lawyer. Once friendly with Wilson, Joline had broken with the president on the Quad scheme, which he denounced as chimerical. Joline's election, Wilson felt, was a peril that must be averted at all cost.

Wilson carried his fight direct to the alumni, particularly those in the West. He rather astonished one meeting of alumni in a mid-western town by exclaiming: "Unless you give me complete authority how can I make Princeton a democratic college?" He raised the issue of plutocracy versus democracy in the colleges. In words that bit and burned, he told a cheering audience in Pittsburgh:

You can't spend four years at one of our modern universities without getting in your thought the conviction which is most dangerous to America—namely, that you must treat with certain influences which now dominate

in the commercial undertakings of the country.

The great voice of America does not come from seats of learning. It comes in a murmur from the hills and woods and the farms and factories and the mills, rolling on and gaining volume until it comes to us from the homes of common men. Do these murmurs echo in the corridors of universities? I have not heard them.

The universities would make men forget their common origins, forget their universal sympathies, and join a class—and no class can ever serve America.

I have dedicated every power that there is within me to bring the colleges that I have anything to do with to an absolutely democratic regeneration in spirit, and I shall not be satisfied—and I hope you will not be—until America shall know that the men in the colleges are saturated with the same thought, the same sympathy, that pulses through the whole great body politic.

I know that the colleges of this country must be reconstructed from top to bottom, and I know that America is going to demand it. While Princeton men pause and think, I hope—and the hope arises out of the great love I share with you all for our inimitable Alma Mater—I hope that they will think on

these things, that they will forget tradition in the determination to see to it that the free air of America shall permeate every cranny of their college.

Will America tolerate the seclusion of graduate students? Will America tolerate the idea of having graduate students set apart? America will tolerate nothing except unpatronized endeavor. Seclude a man, separate him from the rough-and-tumble of college life, from all the contacts of every sort and condition of men, and you have done a thing which America will brand with its contemptuous disapproval.

In effect Wilson's appeal was to the country. It was successful. Joline was defeated. The Procter gift was blocked. Once again Wilson strode the campus with springy step. In chapel he prayed as one sure of his communion.

Then, like a bolt from the blue, came a blow that humbled him into the dust.

Late in May, 1910, as he sat in his study at Prospect, the president's house, David Lawrence, a student correspondent, called. Lawrence handed him a telegram from the *New York Times*:

Isaac C. Wyman, of Salem, Massachusetts, died leaving an estate valued at over ten million dollars to the Graduate School at Prince-

ton, naming his attorney, John H. Raymond, and Dean Andrew F. West, executors. Ask President Wilson for statement to use in connection with the announcement in tomorrow's paper.

Wilson read the message rapidly, then more slowly. The color fled from his face but he did not lose control.

"Lawrence," he said, "this means defeat. We never can overcome ten millions. Nothing tonight, Lawrence—you'll understand."

Though the Wyman ten millions shrank to considerably less than three, the fight was over. The renewed Procter offer and the Wyman bequest were formally accepted by the trustees, and today the Graduate College, which was put in Dean West's charge, stands upon the site selected by him.

When the perfunctory meeting of the trustees was over, Wilson asked West to come to Prospect. The two men faced each other alone. Wilson said: "Now, listen—don't speak till I finish. I wish to say that I desire to coöperate with you generally and in every possible way in working toward the success of the Graduate School under this bequest. The size of the gift entirely changes the perspective."

A week or so later West invited Wilson to a dinner in honor of Moses Taylor Pyne's twenty-five years' service as a Princeton trustee. In the home of his bitter foeman Wilson presented a silver loving-cup to the guest of honor.

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And so, with this friendly gesture, the curtain fell upon Woodrow Wilson's eight stormy years as president of Princeton.

Soon he was to emerge upon a greater stage.

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*Chapter 7.*

POLITICAL

PRELIMINARY

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### POLITICAL PRELIMINARY

AT FOUR O'CLOCK ON THE AFTERNOON OF SEPTEMBER 15, 1910, two men slipped through the ladies' entrance of the Trenton House, in Trenton, New Jersey, and cautiously made their way to a secluded suite.

One was William O. Inglis, chief assistant to Col. George Harvey, editor, promoter, political manipulator extraordinary.

The other was Woodrow Wilson, president of Princeton University and candidate for the Democratic nomination for Governor of New Jersey. His face was ruddy and tanned from a summer in the outdoors. He wore a felt hat, a sack suit of dark gray mixture, not very new, a knitted golf jacket—and an air of detachment.

At the Taylor Opera House, a couple of blocks away, a turbulent battle was being fought. Col. Harvey and the Democratic state bosses were trying to force Wilson's nomination upon a sullen, rebellious convention. This was the vital preliminary step of Harvey's three-year campaign to put Wilson in the White House.

"In the rather gloomy Victorian parlor of Colonel Harvey's rooms," William Inglis recalled to the writer, "Mr. Wilson and I waited to learn whether the hostile convention would obey the bosses or whether he must glide home without his prize. I have never seen such cool

courage as that of Woodrow Wilson as he sat there for an hour and a quarter, his whole future hanging upon the action of the convention.

"I telephoned right and left for some scrap of news from the hall, always getting the answer: 'They are calling the roll.' I was quivering like a guitar string. Wilson was placid as a frozen lake—though there must have been a boiling spring far below the icy surface. I offered him various refreshments—Scotch, rye, mineral water, even tea. 'No—o—,' he replied with a slow and unforced smile, 'I shall be all the better without any refreshment just now.' "

Let us leave the waiting Wilson in the hotel parlor and cast back into the series of dramatic events which preceded the Trenton convention. These events were molded by the far-sighted and ambitious Harvey and his friend, former United States Senator James Smith, Jr., Democratic boss of New Jersey. They had foraged in many fields, these two, and formed an incomparable team.

George Harvey, a native of Vermont, began life clerking in a country grocery store. A natural flair for talking and writing landed him in newspaper work. The year 1885 found him in New Jersey writing politics for the *New York World*. Clever, amusing, he at once attracted influential friends. In 1887 he blossomed forth as a Colonel on the military staff of Governor Robert S. Green. Another New Jersey governor, Leon Abbott, persuaded the legislature of 1891 to create a state de-

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partment of banking and insurance in order to take care of Harvey.

Harvey resigned to become managing editor of the *World*. However, he maintained his home in New Jersey and kept up his political contacts there. One of these contacts was with the suave and portly Senator James Smith, Jr., known as Big Jim and the Big Fellow. Beginning as an alderman in Newark, Smith worked his way up the ladder of practical politics until he became state boss and a power in national Democratic councils. Smith was a tremendously likable person, whose pockets always jingled with the gold of huge railroad and utility corporations. It was he who introduced Harvey to William C. Whitney and Thomas Fortune Ryan.

Harvey aided these titans of finance in putting through consolidations of trolley lines along the New Jersey shore and in Staten Island. Whitney and Ryan in turn aided Harvey by suggesting to J. P. Morgan, who had loaned \$400,000 to the publishing firm of Harper & Bros., that Harvey be placed in charge. This old and respected house, incidentally, was the publisher of Woodrow Wilson's books.

As head of Harper & Bros., Harvey was now in his element. His position gave him a chance to indulge to the full his love of the spectacular. He built a beautiful dining hall in the Harper offices, Franklin Square, New York, and gave elaborate banquets. Here visiting literary and social lions spread napkins with the chief writing men of America and leading nabobs of Wall Street—all of which was fine for the Harvey prestige if not

for the financial standing of Harper & Bros. The debt to Morgan grew to more than a million dollars.

At this juncture, with every art at his command, Harvey began to boom Woodrow Wilson for President. As to his motives, one person's guess is as good as another's. One thing, though, is certain: if ever a man had his heart set on making a President, that man was George Harvey.

The problem was to get his man started, advantageously, in public life. This had to be done quickly in view of the 1912 national election. Harvey focused upon New Jersey, a state which was crying for a new type of leadership. For years New Jersey had been a notorious nesting place for tax-dodging corporations, a conquered province under the heel of a horde of lobbyists known as the Black Horse Cavalry. Honest men in both parties were clamoring for a change. In this respect New Jersey merely reflected the cry for reform that was beating against standpat fortresses all over the country.

Harvey felt that if Wilson could win the governorship of New Jersey in 1910, as a progressive Democrat, the way would be cleared to vault him into the White House in 1912. So Harvey turned to his old friend Smith.

Though Smith was still the Big Fellow in New Jersey politics, his road for the past several years had not been smooth. His personal and political fortunes were at low ebb. The younger element in the Democratic party was crying for his retirement. Desperately, he needed to pick a winner.

Smith wasn't particularly enthusiastic over Wilson

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but agreed to line up his organization and consult further with Harvey upon the latter's return from Europe in the spring of 1910. Harvey talked with Wilson, who was coy, merely saying that if the nomination came to him unsolicited, he would consult his conscience and his sense of duty.

When Harvey got back in June, Smith reported that his fellow bosses—Little Bob Davis, of Hudson County, and James R. Nugent, of Essex—had agreed to go along for Wilson, but that the rank and file threatened to kick over the traces. The majority of the boys, said Smith, favored Frank S. Katzenbach, the party's nominee at the previous election.

"Will your man accept the nomination?" demanded Smith. "We've got to know for sure."

"Come to my house for dinner Sunday night," assured Harvey. "I'll have Wilson there and we'll pin him down."

He 'phoned Wilson at once. The Princeton President said that on Saturday he was taking his family to Lyme, Connecticut, for the summer but that he would come down Sunday for the conference. Harvey impressed upon him the importance of the occasion.

On Saturday evening, while the Harveys and William Inglis were dining on the porch of the Harvey home, a telegram was handed to the Colonel. It read:

Lyme, Conn., June 26, 1910.

*Colonel George Harvey, Deal, New Jersey:*

Sorry to find there is no train from here to-

morrow. Deeply regret I shall not be able to attend dinner.

WOODROW WILSON.

According to Inglis, Harvey glanced at the telegram in silence.

"Something has happened to disappoint you," remarked Mrs. Harvey. "What is it?"

"Only this," Harvey replied, handing her the yellow slip. She read it and exclaimed: "I am just as well pleased. I am glad it is over." Turning to Inglis she continued: "George has been working himself sick trying to put that man into politics. This finishes it."

"Maybe you are glad because you don't like Wilson," commented Harvey, with a faint smile.

For some moments the dinner proceeded in silence.

"Well," said Harvey finally, "it's now or never. Something must be done. What next?"

"If it wouldn't seem," suggested Inglis, "too much of a reflection upon Dr. Wilson's lack of initiative and resource, I'd go up and bring him down."

"How?"

"Lyme is only fifteen miles or so from New London," explained Inglis. "The express from Boston to New York stops at New London somewhere around noon. I could run over from New London in the morning and fetch Wilson back in time to catch the express. We could get here by seven o'clock tomorrow evening."

Harvey leaped at the idea.

The next morning at ten-thirty found Inglis ringing

the bell of the stately home of Miss Maria Griswold in Lyme, where the Wilsons were boarding. It was here that Mrs. Wilson came every summer to paint and renew acquaintance with the many artists who made Lyme their headquarters.

"The door swung inward," related Inglis, "and I saw that it was being opened by the very man I had come to seek. He had a hymn book in his hand. I bade him good morning, handed him my card and said: 'Colonel Harvey has asked me to drop in and bring you down to dinner this evening.' 'Oh,' he replied, without the slightest hesitation, 'I'll have to put some things in a bag. Excuse me.' He stepped briskly to the door of the drawing room in which Mrs. Wilson and one of his daughters were waiting for him to join them on their way to church. Mrs. Wilson made some smiling comment about his failure to go to church that morning and he replied with an air of finality: 'Oh, Colonel Harvey has sent for me.' That settled *that*. He packed his grip quickly and we were off.

"On the trip I had an opportunity to study him. One's first impression of great height and slimness was corrected by closer observation. He was under rather than over six feet in stature. The deep-lined cheeks, high cheek bones, the nose, at once big and thin and rather aquiline, and the outjutting chin all combined to make him seem gaunt and long. The grayish-blue eyes seemed cold behind their glasses. His lean, stringy-muscled, big-boned physique, the homely smile of his broad and

powerful mouth carried more the suggestion of a Western than a Southern man.

"We reached Deal by seven o'clock. Colonel Henry Watterson, of Kentucky, was there as well as Senator Smith. The dinner was delightful. Senator Smith was rather quiet, but Marse Henry Watterson was at his best and Wilson was as lively as a cricket. Our hostess, myself and one or two others who were present retired when coffee was served, leaving Colonel Harvey, Colonel Watterson, Senator Smith and Doctor Wilson in the dining-room, where they remained until nearly midnight."

The conference won over Smith completely to the idea of running Wilson for Governor. The Big Fellow thought him an odd fish, but powerful. Wilson, however, did not definitely consent to enter the lists. He returned to Lyme and anxiously paced the studio in which Mrs. Wilson was painting.

As the days went by, a decision became necessary. Senator Smith, catching some of Harvey's enthusiasm, lured Wilson to New York where he met Richard V. Lindabury, J. P. Morgan's lawyer and foremost attorney of New Jersey; Robert S. Hudspeth, counsel for the New Jersey Liquor Dealers' Association; Representative Eugene F. Kinkead, of the Davis Hudson County machine, and other giants in New Jersey affairs. All assured Wilson that, if he would accept the nomination, he could win easily. Wilson proved a wonderful listener. He returned to Lyme, bicycled over the countryside, played golf, and talked long with Mrs. Wilson. Finally,



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on July 15, 1910, he came out openly for the nomination. This was his statement:

There has been so much talk of the possibility of my being nominated by the Democrats of New Jersey for the Governorship of the State, and I have been asked by so many persons whom I respect what my attitude would be towards such a nomination that it would be an affectation and discourtesy on my part to ignore the matter any longer.

I need not say that in no sense am I a candidate for this nomination, and therefore I shall not do anything to obtain it.

My present duty and responsibilities are such as should satisfy any man desirous of rendering public service. They certainly satisfy me, and I do not wish to be drawn away from them.

But my wish does not constitute my duty, and if it should turn out to be true, as so many well-informed persons have assured me they believe it will be, that it is the wish and hope of a decided majority of the thoughtful Democrats of the State that I should consent to accept the party's nomination for the great office of Governor, I should deem it my duty, as well as an honor and privilege to do so.

I cannot and do not venture to assume that this is the case, and it remains to be seen whether it is or not. I should not feel person-

ally disappointed if it should turn out otherwise.

Instantly there was a blast of anger from the leading Democratic and Independent newspapers of the state. These charged that Wall Street, through Harvey, the Morgan interests and the Smith machine, were seeking to impose Wilson upon the Democratic party. Wilson was pictured as a scholarly figurehead who had seldom, if ever, voted and who was incapable of taking charge of the state's affairs.

The Wilson critics pointed out that there were already three popular and progressive Democrats in the field—Frank Katzenbach, George S. Silzer and Mayor H. Otto Wittpenn, of Jersey City. All favored direct primaries, employers' liability laws, utility commissions with rate-making powers, and popular election of United States senators. Wilson had not declared himself on any of these issues.

Indeed, there was open revolt in the party ranks as the time approached for the convening of the Democratic state convention on September 15, 1910.

Harvey and Smith moved into quarters in the Trenton House the day before the convention assembled. On the surface they appeared confident. Beneath their outward calm, however, these veteran wire-pullers were greatly perturbed.

All night long men surged through the hotel corridors, which reeked of whiskey and cigar smoke. At six o'clock

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on the morning of the 15th Col. Harvey, ashen-faced, awakened his assistant, Inglis.

"Bill," he said, "we're up against it. This man Silzer from New Brunswick has got the big northern counties away from us, and the Senator can't get them back. We have got to put Wilson over on the first ballot or we never can. The Katzenbach men are so angry that they will go over to Silzer like a shot and take enough of our men to nominate Silzer. The cold fact is that at this moment we haven't the votes, and we've got to get them. I have just left the Senator. He is lying down in his clothes, but can't sleep. I must, if I can, for a little. Have a cup of coffee and wake me at a quarter before eight. And, Bill, for God's sake, don't let a whisper get out about Wilson's coming over to Trenton. Think of it. Here I have brought him over to receive the nomination which I have told him was certain. He doesn't know ten men in the whole convention. He is relying upon me absolutely and without a question. If we should be beaten and it should get out that he had come to Trenton, he would be the laughing-stock of his enemies, if not of the country, and I would be responsible. Can't you see it would be a personal tragedy? It simply must not be. Now, don't fail me."

The convention opened at noon. The old Taylor Opera House was jammed to the doors with a sweltering mass of delegates. Men loosened their ties and let down their suspenders, and the battle was on. During a short recess Harvey told Inglis:

"It's going to be a close squeak, but we'll win if Smith

can hold Essex County and I guess he can. Have Wilson in my room at the hotel at four o'clock. If we win, he'll have to address the convention. If we lose, get him back to Princeton as quickly as possible. Above all, no one must see him. Go to it, old boy."

Shortly after three o'clock Inglis stepped from a car in front of the Princeton president's home. Before he could ring the bell Wilson himself opened the door, smiled and said: "I am ready."

"He was calm, unruffled," recalls Inglis, "distinctly debonair, I should say, were it not for a certain appearance of gravity. There was little traffic and we reached the hotel by four o'clock. I hustled him up a side stairway and into Colonel Harvey's rooms. Here we waited one of the longest hours I have ever spent. Wilson's outward calm never left him. I vaguely remember that he told some amusing anecdotes, but to save my life I can't remember a word. Nothing seemed to register, except the dreadful suspense. Always the only news I could get over the 'phone was: 'They are calling the roll.' Time crawled. Still we sat and waited.

"Doctor Wilson, I think, was telling another anecdote when, at ten minutes past five o'clock, I heard a quick, nervous rapping on the outer door of the next room. I hurriedly opened the door. In the corridor stood a very pale man, all in black. 'Is Doctor Wilson here?' he asked eagerly. 'I am Mr. Cole, of Atlantic, I made the nominating speech.'

"I led the way into the sitting room where I introduced him to Doctor Wilson, who had risen and was

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scrutinizing his visitor's white and serious countenance. 'Doctor Wilson,' said Mr. Cole, 'I have the pleasant duty to inform you—that you have been nominated—for Governor of New Jersey—on the first ballot—and—it has been made unanimous.'

" 'Thank you,' Dr. Wilson answered, 'I am ready.'

"I guess that is the shortest acceptance of a nomination on record—and I am not quite sure that he said 'thank you.' "

At the Opera House a stentorian voice was bellowing: "Gentlemen of the Convention: We have just received word that Mr. Wilson, our candidate for Governor, and the next President of the United States, has left Princeton and is now on his way to the convention!"

Though Harvey and Smith beamed, half the audience sat sullen and silent. A few minutes later Wilson walked quietly from the wings and faced the delegates, nine-tenths of whom were seeing him for the first time.

"Gentlemen," he said, with his perfect articulation, "I did not seek this nomination. I have made no pledge and have given no promises. If elected, I am left absolutely free to serve you with all singleness of purpose. It is a new era when these things can be said, and in connection with this I feel that the dominant idea of the moment is the responsibility of deserving. I will have to serve the state very well in order to deserve the honor of being at its head. Did you ever experience the elation of a great hope, that you desire to do right because it is right and without thought of doing it for your own interest? At that period your hopes are unselfish. This

in particular is a day of unselfish purpose for Democracy. The country has been universally misled and the people have begun to believe that there is something radically wrong.

"And now we should make this era of hope one of realization through the Democratic party. Government is not a warfare of interests. We shall not gain our ends by heat and bitterness. The future is not for parties 'playing politics' but for measures conceived in the largest spirit, pushed by parties whose leaders are statesmen, not demagogues, who love not their offices but their duty and their opportunity for service.

"We are witnessing a renaissance of public spirit, a reawakening of sober public opinion, a revival of the power of the people, the beginning of an age of thoughtful reconstruction that makes our thoughts hark back to the age in which democracy was set up in America. With the new age we shall show a new spirit. We shall serve justice and candor and all things that make for the right. Is not our own party disciplined and made ready for this great task? Shall we not forget ourselves in making it the instrument of righteousness for the state and for the nation?"

The speaker paused. The curious irony of his opening declaration had been submerged in the lofty emotionalism of his succeeding phrases.

"Go on, go on!" came cries from the floor. The audience went wild. Here was a man so frank, so simple, so sincere—a man such as they had never before encountered in politics. His words inflamed their imagina-

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tion and dug deeply into their hearts. It was as though a new prophet had appeared among them. Wilson's magnetic sentences not only moved that rough-and-tumble assemblage but created in it a sense, almost, of reverence.

Wilson pointed to the flag that hung over the speakers' table and concluded:

"When I think of the flag which our ships carry, the only touch of color about them, the only thing that moves as if it had a settled spirit in it—in their solid structure, it seems to me I see alternate strips of parchment upon which are written the rights of liberty and justice and strips of blood spilled to vindicate those rights; and then—in the corner—a prediction of the blue serene into which every nation may swim which stands for these great things."

That moving climax unleashed the house. Men cheered and pounded each other on the back in a frenzy of emotion. There were tears in many eyes. Old John Crandall, of Atlantic City, who had fought bitterly against Wilson's nomination, waved his stick high over his head and shouted: "I am sixty-five years old and still a damn fool!"

"What was my exact majority?" was Wilson's first remark to Col. Harvey, as they rode back to the hotel through cheering sidewalk crowds.

"Enough," replied Harvey, brushing a hand over his tired eyes.

During the six weeks of campaigning that followed, Wilson learned the tricks of his new trade. The idea of a

scholar in politics attracted nation-wide attention. His eloquent speeches continued to sway growing crowds. He thoroughly enjoyed his position on the platform but balked at any suggestion of personal contact.

In fact, Wilson was far from easy to manage and at times became positively stubborn. A genial young Irish progressive, Joseph P. Tumulty, of Jersey City, was engaged to accompany the candidate and iron out difficulties. He succeeded admirably. Eventually he became Wilson's secretary and for more than ten years served him with exceptional devotion.

Wilson soon dispelled the notion that he was an instrument of the interests that had so long controlled New Jersey. He whirled through the state, proclaiming himself an unbossed progressive. At Trenton, on October 3, he declared that he would welcome an opportunity to debate public questions with any responsible Republican. It was a bold challenge for an amateur politician and was made without the knowledge of the party bosses.

George L. Record, a redoubtable debater, at once took up the gage. Record was a brilliant, forceful, independent Republican of radical views. For years, from a small law office in Jersey City, he had been battling the corporations almost single-handed. He had made himself a fearsome figure.

Thoroughly alarmed, the Democratic managers urged Wilson to ignore Record. Wilson carefully considered the matter. Republican newspapers and spellbinders began to jeer at Wilson. Soon the whole state was aroused.



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It began to appear that Wilson was dodging the issue. In reality, he was getting mad. Without consulting any of his party leaders he offered to debate Record through an interchange of letters. He promised an unequivocal reply to any questions Record might care to put to him.

Record submitted nineteen questions. Wilson's response was frank, and devastating to the Republican cause. Some of the questions and answers follow:

RECORD: Do you admit that the boss system exists as I have described it? If so, how do you propose to abolish it?

WILSON: Of course I admit it. Its existence is notorious. I have made it my business for many years to observe and understand that system, and I hate it as thoroughly as I understand it. You are quite right in saying that the system is bi-partisan; that it constitutes the most dangerous condition in the public life of our state and nation today; and that it has virtually for the time being destroyed representative government and in its place set up a government of privilege. I would propose to abolish it by the reforms suggested in the Democratic platform, by the election to office of men who will refuse to submit to it, and who will lend all their energies to breaking it up by pitiless publicity.

RECORD: In referring to the Board of Guardians, do you mean such Republican leaders

as Baird, Murphy, Kean and Stokes? Wherein do the relations of the special interest of such leaders differ from the relations of the same interests of such Democratic leaders as Smith, Nugent and Davis?

WILSON: I refer to the men you named. I mean Smith, Nugent and Davis. They differ from the others in this, that they are in control of the government of the State, while the others are not, and cannot be if the present Democratic ticket is elected.

RECORD: Will you join me in denouncing the Democratic "overlords" as parties to a political boss system?

WILSON: Certainly I will join you, or anyone else, in denouncing and fighting every and any of either party who attempts any outrage against the government and public morality.

Wilson drew his own Magna Charta of personal freedom in replying to Record's question as to what would be Wilson's attitude, if elected, toward the bosses who had brought about his nomination:

You wish to know what my relations would be with the Democrats whose power and influence you fear should I be elected Governor, particularly in such important matters as appointments and the signing of bills, and I am very glad to tell you. If elected I shall not

## POLITICAL PRELIMINARY

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either in the matter of appointments to office, or assent to legislation, or in shaping any part of the policy of my administration, submit to the dictation of any person or persons, "special interests", or organizations. I will always welcome advice and suggestions from any citizen, whether boss, leader, organization man, or plain citizen, and I shall confidently seek the advice of influential and disinterested men representative of the communities and disconnected from political organizations entirely; but all suggestions and all advice will be considered on their merits, and no additional weight will be given to any man's advice because of his exercising, or supposing that he exercises, some sort of political influence or control. I should deem myself forever disgraced should I, in even the slightest degree, co-operate in any such system. I regard myself as pledged to the regeneration of the Democratic party.

From that moment, the tide flowed fast in Wilson's favor. The campaign became a crusade. Wilson had struck an emotional chord in the heart of the common man. That emotion flowed back into his lonely Scotch nature. His final speech of the campaign touched a vision that must have been stirring in his soul from boyhood.

"I want you to take a sportsman's chance on me,"

he told a huge crowd in Newark. When the cheers had subsided, he continued:

"We have begun a fight that, it may be, will take many a generation to complete, the fight against privilege. But you know that men are not put into this world to go the path of ease. They are put into this world to go the path of pain and struggle. No man would wish to sit idly by and lose the opportunity to take part in such a struggle. All through the centuries there has been this slow, painful struggle forward, forward, up, up, a little at a time, along the entire incline, the interminable way which leads to the perfection of force, to the real seat of justice and honor.

"America has undertaken to lead the way. Don't you see how far up the hill we have come? Look forward to those who are willing to lead you and say: 'We do not believe you know the whole road. We know that you are no prophet, we know that you are no seer, but we believe that you know the direction and are leading us in that direction, though it costs you your life, provided it does not cost you your honor.'

"And then trust your guides, imperfect as they are, and some day, when we are all dead, men will come and point at the distant upland with a great shout of joy and triumph and thank God that there were men who undertook to lead in the struggle. What difference does it make if we ourselves do not reach the uplands? We have given our lives to the enterprise. The world is made happier and humankind better because we have lived."

## POLITICAL PRELIMINARY

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Wilson won the election by a plurality of 49,000. It was an enormous personal triumph. Only two years before the state had gone Republican by 82,000.

Princeton accepted Wilson's resignation with celerity, and settled down to a pre-Wilson calm.

Senator James Smith, Jr., stood on the terrace of the old mansion in Princeton which had been the Governor-elect's home for eight years as president of Princeton. Admiring the garden made beautiful by Ellen Axson Wilson, the Big Fellow remarked:

"Can you imagine any one being damn fool enough to give this up for the heartaches of politics?"



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*Chapter 8*

PRESIDENTIAL

PREPARATION

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### PRESIDENTIAL PREPARATION

AT PRECISELY THE RIGHT PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT Woodrow Wilson took his Scotch conscience, his brains and his ambitions into practical politics. The country was ripe for reform.

Within a few months of his election to the governorship of New Jersey Wilson had become the most successful amateur politician of his time.

The middle-aged college professor found it necessary to discard pretty classroom theories and himself become a pupil in the rough school of actualities. Groping about in a new world he selected with uncanny skill the right advisers. He attracted to himself a group of men of both parties, mostly young and radical, who were battling for progressive legislation.

These men saw in Wilson an instrument through which New Jersey might at last be redeemed from corporation rule. With high hearts and clean hands they rushed to his support. A little slow at first, but with increasing confidence, Wilson took them into his inner council. They had tremendous influence in transforming Wilson from a theory-loving parlor liberal into a plunging progressive.

Chief among them were George L. Record, Martin P. Devlin, William W. St. John, Joseph P. Tumulty and

James Kerney. Record we have described. This valiant warrior came over to Wilson as soon as he became convinced that the latter was sincere. Devlin, who started life at the potter's bench, had fought his way forward as a labor leader, taught himself law and was now an outstanding political liberal in Trenton. St. John, frail but fearless newspaper man, enjoyed exposing and thwarting crooked deals. Tumulty was to become Wilson's secretary. Kerney was editor and publisher of the independent *Trenton Times*.

For years these men had been fighting for political reform. Hoping, rather than believing, that Wilson really intended to rid himself of the bosses who had brought about his nomination, they sought out the governor-elect and offered aid. They were astonished at his naïve point of view and lack of experience in the everyday arts of politics. They looked upon him a little pityingly at first, then with growing admiration as the man's grasp and moral courage asserted themselves.

The first test came shortly after the election, when Boss James Smith, Jr., announced his candidacy for the United States Senate. The Democrats would have the naming of the next Senator since, unexpectedly, a Democratic legislature had been elected with Wilson. Smith's term in the Senate during the Cleveland administration had been sullied by scandal because of his tariff manipulations. He had promised both Wilson and Harvey that he would not stand again. Now, however, the Big Fellow said he had not been well at the time he had given his word and he wished vindication.

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Smith intended blandly to push aside James Martine who, rather by default, had won the preferential primary. This choice was not legally binding upon the legislature. Martine, a good-natured but bombastic gentleman farmer, had been running unsuccessfully for every conceivable office for forty years. He had ultimately given up his political aspirations, when St. John and Devlin insisted upon his entering the primary.

Martine sank to his knees in St. John's tiny office in the State House and tearfully begged to be let off. "For God's sake, men," he wailed, "don't humiliate me any further. I am now married to a good woman and it isn't fair to her." St. John and Devlin, never dreaming that a Democratic legislature would be elected, bullied him into running.

When the miracle happened they determined to stand by Martine and consulted Wilson. The Governor-elect said he was not at all impressed with Martine's qualifications. In his fascinating volume, "The Political Education of Woodrow Wilson", James Kerney, who was also fighting for Martine, tells how Wilson was finally won over. Kerney and Matthias C. Ely, editor of the *Hudson Observer*, reminded Wilson that the *Newark Evening News*, his staunchest newspaper supporter in the state, was campaigning against Smith and said they hoped the Governor-elect was following the smashing arguments of the *News*.

"Ely and I were amused at his bland reply," narrates Kerney. "He coolly told us that he did not read any New Jersey newspaper; the only newspaper he found

time to read was the *New York Evening Post*. He did not even know that Tumulty was not a member of the legislature. When we quit the house, it was with some despair that Ely and I discussed the apparently hopeless situation of a governor who did not know the politicians in his own party and did not read the state newspapers. It looked dark for Martine. Then came a remarkable development. St. John had been conducting an intelligent publicity campaign in support of the primary choice. Upon learning that it had been utterly wasted so far as Wilson was concerned, he promptly made for New York and induced the *New York Evening Post* to enlist and help convert Wilson to stand by the primary expression for Martine. 'You old gloom, you are now talking to the New Jersey political writer for the *New York Evening Post*,' St. John told me, with a chuckle, over the telephone the next evening. He at once began an educational campaign in the *Evening Post* aimed solely at Wilson."

Soon the state was at fever heat. Wilson's indecision was deceiving to both his friends and enemies. Indeed, Wilson found that his new shoes pinched. It was not so easy for him to get into his stride. The thought of a humiliating defeat at the very beginning of his term was frightening. Col. Harvey and powerful Princeton friends had warned him of the peril in fighting Smith.

All through November Wilson listened to various advisers. One day he dropped into Joseph Tumulty's modest law office in Jersey City. His attitude seemed



GOVERNOR WILSON OF NEW JERSEY  
*Standing is his secretary, Joseph Tumulty.*

© Brown Brothers.



wavering and evasive. Thoroughly disheartened, Tumulty besought him to defy the Democratic bosses.

"You cannot afford not to fight," the impetuous young Irishman insisted. "You must force an immediate test of your leadership. The question of Martine's fitness, as your friends urge, is not an issue seriously to be considered. You cannot reverse the verdict of the voters. Your friends have placed too much emphasis on Martine's alleged unfitness and too little on the duty you owe the party and the state as leader. The fight, in any event, will be made and we wish you to lead it. This is really the first step to the Presidency. Not only the people of New Jersey but the people of America are interested in this fight. They are clamoring for leadership, and I am sure you are the man to lead and that you will not fail."

Wilson did not seem particularly impressed. However, by his own slow processes, he eventually reached a decision. He would fight.

In order to avoid, if possible, a split in party ranks, Wilson visited Bob Davis, the Hudson County boss, who was dangerously ill. He asked support on the ground that the Democratic party for years had advocated direct election of United States Senators. Propped on his pillows, the Little Boss, who had started life as a gas-meter inspector, laughed genially and said:

"Doctor, I have given my solemn promise to support Jim Smith. If the Pope of Rome should come into this room and ask me to break my word, I wouldn't do it. You wouldn't have me break my promise, would you, Doctor?"

"Of course not," replied Wilson. "But you must not feel aggrieved if I shall find it necessary to fight you and Smith in the open."

"Go to it, Doctor. I'm a game sport," said the sick man.

Wilson next visited Smith at the latter's home in Newark. He found the Big Fellow adamant.

On December 9 Wilson formally came out for Martine.

Once in the fight Wilson never turned back. Both sides unlimbered their heavy guns. Religious and racial prejudice entered the fray. The majority of the Democratic legislators were Irish Catholics, as was Smith. Whispers went around that Wilson, a ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church, was biased. Martin Devlin informed Wilson of the situation shortly before the latter was to address a huge rally in St. Patrick's Hall, Jersey City, on January 5, 1911. Devlin suggested that Wilson praise by name several leading Irish Catholic members of the party. Wilson did so with telling effect. Gratefully he wrote to Devlin afterward: "My heart went into the passage, so that it was mine in feeling and yours in form."

Through this and similar clever manœuvres the resourceful young men behind Wilson alienated support from the bosses and brought about the disastrous defeat of Smith. Farmer Jim Martine went to Washington, where he served creditably and enjoyed himself hugely, as did Mrs. Martine. Woodrow Wilson was rapidly learning the ways of professional politics.



## PRESIDENTIAL PREPARATION

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Bryan and La Follette appeared to him in a new light. These leaders, whom he had denounced as demagogues, he now admired wholeheartedly. Soon he was to say of La Follette: "I have sometimes thought of Senator La Follette climbing the mountain of privilege . . . taunted, laughed at, called back, going steadily on and not allowing himself to be deflected for a single moment, for fear he also should harken and lose all his power to serve the great interests to which he had devoted himself. I love these lonely figures climbing this ugly mountain of privilege . . . I feel sorry, for my own part, that I did not come in when they were fewer."

In his inaugural message of January 17, 1911, Wilson approved almost in its entirety what had become known as the Oregon plan of direct legislation. Already Wilson had deputed George L. Record to draw up a corrupt practices act, a primary and election law, an employers' liability bill, and a measure for the regulation of public utilities, similar to that of Gov. Hughes's in New York.

Although Wilson had been a lawyer he had not the slightest idea how to draw a bill. Nor was he acquainted with the routine of his office. The day after the inauguration James F. Dale, a newspaper man who had met Wilson at Princeton, came upon the Governor strolling the deserted corridors of the State House. It was an hour before employees were due. "Dale," remarked Wilson, a little forlornly, "how does one go about the business of being governor? I don't even know how to appoint my secretary."

In fact, Wilson took scant interest in routine matters.

His dislike of patronage and the bickerings attached to it amounted almost to a mania. One night, early in the administration, Secretary Tumulty appeared at Editor Kerney's house with a big bundle of typewritten sheets. "Jim," said Tumulty laughing, "here is the darnedest assignment we've ever had. Here's a list of all the appointments the Governor has to make. He wants us to go over it and suggest names."

Wilson never bothered to meet the majority of men he appointed to office. "What have we been doing for Blank, that he has been in here thanking me so profusely?" he asked Kerney one day. Kerney explained that Wilson had given Blank a very snug job. Wilson laughed heartily.

Though he paid slight attention to patronage, Wilson watched his big issues keenly. Whenever crossed, he threatened to take each of his reform measures direct to the people. This was no idle threat. From the first he had the majority of the newspapers and liberal elements in both parties behind his program. Soon it became politically dangerous to oppose him. When manufacturers intimated that they would have the drastic employers' liability act declared unconstitutional in the courts, State Senator Walter Edge, a Republican but a Wilson supporter, suggested that Louis Brandeis or some equally prominent attorney be retained by the state. That ended that.

"On the closing night of his first legislative session," writes Kerney, "there was much of the usual hubbub that seems to be the accepted method of winding up

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the work of law-making bodies. Many of the important bills were still in the senate hopper. Record and Wilson, with a few others, sat in the outer office of the Governor's suite chatting and waiting for the final batch. At ten o'clock Wilson declared that it was his habit to go to bed early, that he required at least nine hours' sleep; and, calmly walking into his private office, he stretched out on a couch, covered himself with a slumbering robe, and was soon in the land of dreams. The fate of the program that was to help vitalize his presidential boom did not interfere with his comfortable rest. Record kept vigil and saw that there was no serious tampering with the measures."

At the end of three months as Governor of New Jersey, Woodrow Wilson stood forth as the best-publicized reformer in America.

In three months he had smashed the bosses and had written into the law statutes for which the state had been crying for a generation. His dizzy leap into national fame—seldom, if ever, paralleled in political history—was due partly to fortunate circumstance, partly to his own brilliant intuition and ability in selecting men who willingly served him. Now he started out for his higher goal, the Presidency.

A presidential boom is watered by just one thing: money.

A small group of Wilson admirers got together and formed a propaganda and money-raising bureau. They included Walter Hines Page, Cleveland H. Dodge, Oswald Garrison Villard and William F. McCombs.

McCombs, a young lawyer and Princeton graduate, was placed in charge of the first Wilson-for-President headquarters, at 42 Broadway, New York. From here he distributed Wilson's speeches, solicited funds and handled the constantly increasing mass of political correspondence that flowed in. McCombs, a native of Arkansas, had been in delicate health from boyhood. However, he made up in zeal what he lacked in experience and physical vigor.

Wilson's backers decided to show him to the country in his new rôle of presidential candidate. In the spring of 1911 the Governor of New Jersey started on a tour of the West. He made twenty-five speeches and traveled eight thousand miles. Wherever possible he spoke before non-political organizations.

In the West, which was burning with radicalism, Wilson adapted himself to the Roosevelt-Bryan school of social and political thought. People flocked to see and hear the man who had beaten the bosses. Wilson's beautiful rhetoric and newly developed art of rough-and-tumble repartee entranced them. His hand, however, never warmed to the clasp. Strive as he would, he could not overcome his repugnance for the general run of personal contact. William Allen White, meeting him for the first time, found him hard and repellent. "He gave me a hand," writes White, "that felt very much like a five-cent mackerel: cold, stiff, moist, unresponsive, extended something as though a clerk desiring a larger sale would casually poke the fish across a counter. He smiled, but I got the wrong side of his face, a side which

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gave me a certain impression of a reptilian personality—a strong sense of some essential treachery in the man!”

Upon his return to Trenton, Wilson was chagrined to learn that he had been docked a month's pay. He complained bitterly to the State Comptroller, who told him the New Jersey constitution provided that the salary, as well as the powers and duties of an absentee governor, must go to the President of the Senate. Senator Ernest R. Ackerman, who had acted as governor, solved the matter by indorsing the pay check over to Wilson. The latter was fervid in his appreciation. On subsequent trips out of the state the same procedure was followed.

Meanwhile the McCombs bureau in New York was expanding tremendously; so was its need of funds. McCombs spent all his time begging money. Cleveland H. Dodge was the most generous contributor. Other Princeton alumni continued to give liberally. William G. McAdoo, builder of the Hudson tubes, and a most agile promoter, jumped into the Wilson camp.

McCombs, McAdoo and Oswald Garrison Villard, then editing the *New York Evening Post*, formed an inner board of strategy. They made things hum. Frederick C. Penfield, of Philadelphia, was enlisted by Col. Henry Watterson. Impressed by a speech that Wilson made on the Jews, in Carnegie Hall, Henry Morgenthau joined the underwriters. Many hundreds of thousands of dollars were expended in the campaign. McCombs alone collected and spent a quarter of a million.

“The great difficulty with your campaign,” McCombs

wrote Wilson on one occasion, "is the aloofness of a great many of the men in the various districts who do things. These are the men the people follow and are the men who in the main select the delegates. They have an impression of you in a large degree that you are austere and dictatorial and that you will ~~not~~ have a due appreciation of what is to be done for you. It is hard to convince the hundreds of men who really control things that this is not so. It is hard to see them and tell them. Another thing I hear much of, particularly throughout the East, is that you are unreliable. I have suggested that you have your strong friends in Congress and elsewhere as far as possible come and see you. I think it is vital. The human contact is more vital than anything I know. These people will be greatly pleased to come and see you. It is a valuable thing to give people attention and notice, whether you take their advice or not."

The man Wilson wanted most to win was William J. Bryan, who still had veto power over the Democratic party. Bryan had never been very much interested in Wilson, whom he considered a sham progressive. Intensely suspicious by nature, the Commoner held George Harvey's sponsorship of Wilson as proof that the latter was a Wall-Street puppet. Bryan threatened to be the biggest obstacle in the presidential path. How to bring the two men together had long puzzled Wilson's friends.

By one deft, feminine touch Ellen Axson Wilson solved the problem.

Learning that Bryan was to be a dinner guest on March 12, 1911, of the Rev. and Mrs. Dr. Charles R.

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Erdman, professor in the Princeton Theological Seminary, Mrs. Wilson arranged to have herself and her husband invited. Wilson was in Georgia for an address. Mrs. Wilson wired him to return at once. Wilson did. The dinner passed pleasantly. Bryan, meeting Wilson for the first time, gained a more favorable impression. Afterward, as First Lady of the land, Mrs. Wilson remarked to Mrs. Erdman: "That dinner put Mr. Wilson in the White House."

It required, however, the practised hand of Col. Edward M. House to convince Bryan finally that Wilson was a genuine progressive.

House himself was a new recruit in the Wilson cause. He was to prove the most valuable. This soft-spoken, subtle little Texan, in fact, was moving gradually into the sphere of influence that had long been pre-empted by Harvey. Politics was House's passion. In his native state he had made and unmade governors. Too frail to hold active office, he made himself a power behind many a throne. Inheriting an independent fortune, he played the game for the sheer love of it. As far back as Grant's day he had had access to the White House. For years, in Texas, he had fostered liberal legislation which he hoped would eventually be adopted throughout the country. His talent-seeking eyes were constantly on the alert for a leader. Wilson, naturally, had attracted his attention. After his first meeting with Wilson, House wrote to Dr. Sidney E. Mezes, his brother-in-law:

"He is not the biggest man that I have met, but one of the pleasantest. And I would rather play with him

than with any prospective candidate I have seen. From what I had heard I was afraid that he would have to have his hats made to order. But I saw not the slightest evidence of it. Never before have I found the opportunity and the man."

House, in turn, attracted Wilson as no other man ever had. Soon the two were exchanging letters almost daily. Within an incredibly short time the Texan became Wilson's chief confidant. House went to work on his old friend Bryan. "I have been with Mr. Bryan a good part of the morning," he wrote Wilson on November 18, 1911, "and I am pleased to tell you that I think you will have his support. The fact that you did not vote for him in '96 was on his mind, but I offered an explanation which seemed to be satisfactory. My main effort was in alienating him from Champ Clark, and I believe I was successful there."

Both House and Bryan were concerned over the continued support of Wilson by the reactionary *Harper's Weekly*, which for months had carried upon its editorial page a streamer advocating Wilson for President. One day in December House suggested to his friend E. S. Martin, who was associated with Col. Harvey on the *Weekly*, that the magazine tone down its praise of Wilson for political reasons. Martin passed the word to Harvey. "Is that so?" said Harvey, somewhat cryptically, and at once wrote a double-page editorial in favor of Wilson.

Soon after this incident Harvey and Col. Henry Watterson met Wilson at the Manhattan Club. In his





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WOODROW WILSON AND COLONEL HOUSE



## PRESIDENTIAL PREPARATION

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point-blank fashion Harvey asked: "Wilson, is there anything left of that cheap talk during the gubernatorial campaign about my advocating you on behalf of the interests?" The Governor replied, with emphasis: "Yes, there is. I lunched today with two of the young men in my literary bureau and they both declared it was having a serious effect in the West." Harvey then asked: "Is there anything I can do—except, of course, to stop advocating your nomination?" Wilson said: "I think not." There was an icy silence. Then Wilson said: "Good-day, gentlemen," and walked out.

Thus, peremptorily, did Wilson dismiss the man who had put him into politics and supported him so loyally for five long years.

In the next issue of *Harper's Weekly*, Col. Harvey made the laconic announcement that "the name of Woodrow Wilson as our candidate for President was taken down from the head of these columns in response to a statement made directly to us by Governor Wilson to the effect that our support was affecting his candidacy injuriously."

Instantly a storm of abuse descended upon Wilson. He was accused of crass ingratitude. Belatedly, he realized his discourtesy and wrote to Harvey:

Every day I am confirmed in the judgment that my mind is a one-track road and can run only one train of thought at a time! A long time after that interview with you and Marse Henry at the Manhattan Club, it came over

me that when (at the close of the interview) you asked me that question about the *Weekly* I answered it simply as a matter of fact, and of business, and said never a word of my sincere gratitude to you for all your generous support, or of my hope that it might be continued. Forgive me and forget my manners!

Harvey acknowledged the note, formally, but the friendship was at an end.

Tom Pence, one of Wilson's publicity men, made adroit use of the Harvey-Wilson rupture. Pence concocted a yarn that the break had been caused by Wilson's refusal to accept funds from Thomas Fortune Ryan and other Wall Street friends of Harvey. Col. Watterson promptly came flying to Harvey's defense. The peppery Kentucky editor said that the Wilson forces had not barred Wall Street men in their quest for campaign funds. He added that he himself had been asked to rustle for money, with no questions asked as to its source.

Wilson flatly denied this. Watterson called Wilson a liar and offered to submit his proofs either to a court of honor or to Pitchfork Ben Tillman, United States Senator from South Carolina. Wilson called Watterson "a fine old gentleman" and refused to continue the controversy. The teapot tempest, while it lasted, ate up a lot of newsprint paper.

Speaking of the break with Harvey, Col. House says: "I am afraid I was responsible for it. But Wilson owes

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more to Harvey than to any other man. He owes his nomination largely to two things: first to Harvey's support and then to his opposition. Wilson would never have gotten on the right track except for this incident and the acrimonious discussion by Col. Watterson that followed. Bryan would never have trusted Wilson if he had not broken with Harvey, whom he regarded as Morgan's agent."

In the Wilson camp, as Harvey moved out, House moved in.

Events ticked along peacefully until the annual Jackson Day in Washington, January 8, 1912, at which Bryan and Wilson were to speak. On the eve of the dinner the newspapers flared out with a letter written by Wilson five years earlier—April 29, 1907—to Adrian H. Joline, Princeton alumnus. Criticizing Bryan's advocacy of government ownership of railways, Wilson wrote: "Would that we could do something at once dignified and effective to knock Mr. Bryan once for all into a cocked hat."

The Wilson managers were panic-stricken, fearing that all their careful missionary work on Bryan would be lost. Fortunately, Bryan was spending the night with Josephus Daniels, a loyal Wilson admirer, in Raleigh, North Carolina. Daniels persuaded Bryan that Wall Street interests had given out the letter to create trouble between Bryan and Wilson.

At the banquet Wilson made a point of praising Bryan in his best oratorical manner. Beaming, the Commoner

## W O O D R O W   W I L S O N

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patted Wilson on the shoulder and gave him his benediction.

Nevertheless, as the 1912 Democratic National Convention in Baltimore approached, Bryan remained the  $x$  in the Wilson equation.

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*Chapter 9*

THE GREAT  
PRIZE

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## CHAPTER NINE

### THE GREAT PRIZE

ONE AFTERNOON IN MID-JUNE, 1912, JOSEPH P. Tumulty's eye was caught by a newspaper headline: "Bryan Challenges Democratic Candidates to Fight Parker."

Governor Wilson's secretary became very excited. W. J. Bryan, it seemed, had sent an identic telegram to the leading candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination denouncing Alton B. Parker, choice of the bosses, as temporary chairman at the rapidly approaching Baltimore convention. "I shall be pleased to join you and your friends in opposing Parker's election," Bryan wired.

Realizing that here was Wilson's big opportunity to ally himself with the Democratic liberals, Tumulty rushed headlong to Sea Girt, New Jersey. In this pleasant seaside resort the Wilsons occupied a cottage provided by the state as the Governor's summer home. The secretary found Wilson unperturbed. Bryan's telegram lay unopened on his desk. Tumulty eagerly favored accepting the Bryan invitation at once. He argued long with Wilson, whose only reply was: "McCombs is on the job in Baltimore. We will wait until we hear what he has to say."

Although the convention was a week off, William F.

McCombs, Wilson's campaign manager, and several other advisers were already in Baltimore. McCombs was convinced that Wilson stood no chance of nomination without the support of the New York delegation controlled by the Tammany boss, Charles F. Murphy. The latter was for Parker. McCombs, therefore, suggested a noncommittal reply to Bryan.

Wilson, as usual, made up his own mind. He wired Bryan: "You are quite right. No one will doubt where my sympathies lie."

This message reached Bryan in Chicago where, as a newspaper correspondent, he was observing the terrific battle between Taft and Roosevelt for control of the Republican party. The Taft machine was ruthlessly ousting Roosevelt delegates. Roosevelt himself was threatening to organize a third party. With glee, Bryan watched the growing schism in the Republican ranks. It made Democratic success in the presidential election almost inevitable. Bryan, as always, was hopeful that he himself might land in the White House.

Armed with Wilson's wire and girded for the greatest battle of his life, the Commoner moved into Baltimore. In Wilson he sensed a spearhead that he could use to conquer his hated enemies, the big city bosses and their financial overlords, who had repeatedly thwarted his own political ambitions. Let the presidential prize fall where it would, Bryan was out for revenge.

The story of the Baltimore convention is the story of W. J. Bryan. In that dramatic struggle the man from Nebraska rose to heights of grandeur. He seemed to

epitomize the prayers and hopes of millions. To the common man he appeared a veritable St. George fighting the dragon of plutocracy. Others saw him merely as a practised politician playing a shrewd game.

The convention opened on Tuesday, June 25. The four leading candidates were Champ Clark, speaker of the House of Representatives; Judson Harmon, Governor of Ohio; Congressman Oscar Underwood, of Alabama, and Woodrow Wilson. The galleries were tense with excitement as Bryan, failing to find a suitable champion, permitted his own name to go before the delegates in opposition to Parker for the temporary chairmanship. Parker won by the narrow vote of 579 to 506.

Senator Ollie James, of Kentucky, devoted personal friend of Bryan, was suggested for permanent chairman. When Bryan 'phoned Wilson at Sea Girt about the selection of James, Wilson agreed heartily. "But, Governor," Bryan pointed out, "he is in the convention as a Clark man." "Oh, that doesn't matter," rejoined Wilson. "I am sure he is our kind of fellow." James was chosen without opposition.

On the first ballot for President, Clark received 440½ votes to Wilson's 324. It was evident at once that Clark was Wilson's most formidable opponent. Clark's pre-convention campaign had been managed with great skill and had the powerful newspaper support of William Randolph Hearst. Clark, a Democratic stalwart, was an old-style Missouri politician who wore suspenders and liked corn liquor. This regular of regulars had worked

his way through county offices into Congress. Politics was the breath of his life. His constituents adored him and brought to Baltimore the famous Missouri hound-dog song: "You Gotta Quit Kicking My Dog Around."

As the balloting went on, Clark made the greatest gains. On the tenth ballot his total was 560 votes, ten more than a majority. Wilson had 360½. When New York shifted its ninety votes from Harmon to Clark there was a wild demonstration, and it then seemed that the battle was over.

This even was the view of the struggling McCombs. He dejectedly 'phoned Wilson at Sea Girt that to continue the fight seemed useless. "So, McCombs, you feel that it is hopeless to make further endeavors?" asked Wilson in a quite casual tone. McCombs said he did and asked Wilson if he desired his delegates to vote for Underwood.

"No, that would not be fair," replied Wilson. "I ought not to try to influence my friends in behalf of another candidate. They have been mighty loyal and kind to me."

As Wilson turned from the telephone Mrs. Wilson, with tears in her eyes, put her arms around him and said: "My dear Woodrow, I am sorry indeed that you have failed." With no outward show of emotion Wilson comforted her. "Of course I am disappointed," he said, "but we must not complain. We must be sportsmen. After all I feel that a great load has been lifted from my shoulders."

Wilson at once penciled a message of congratulation to Champ Clark. It was never sent.

For, by one superb and masterly move, Bryan changed the whole current of the convention. Amid pandemonium he introduced a resolution declaring the convention "opposed to the nomination of any candidate for President who is the representative of or under any obligation to J. Pierpont Morgan, Thomas F. Ryan, August Belmont, or any other member of the privilege-hunting and favor-seeking class."

This followed Tammany's switch to Clark, which had so disheartened McCombs, and was a direct assault upon Ryan, a delegate from Virginia, and Belmont, a delegate from New York. Both were bitter anti-Wilson men. Bryan's dramatic move curled about the Clark boom the sinister tail of the Tammany tiger. After riotous debate, the Bryan resolution was adopted by a vote of more than four to one.

Now Bryan had a plausible excuse to bolt Clark. As a member of the Nebraska delegation he was pledged to the Missourian. In a ringing speech Bryan declared he could no longer vote for one who willingly accepted Tammany support. This began the swing away from Clark. Thousands of telegrams from all parts of the country poured in upon the delegates beseeching them to support Bryan.

As Saturday drew to a close there was a deadlock between Clark and Wilson. It seemed that the convention might continue indefinitely.

Suspicion grew in the minds of the bosses and in those

of a great many neutral observers that Bryan was jockeying to obtain the nomination for himself. The prospect sent shivers down their backs. Of the two evils, Wilson seemed to them the lesser. On Sunday Roger Sullivan, boss of Illinois, and his confrère, Tom Taggart, of Indiana, decided to jump to Wilson unless the Clark forces could put their man over on the next few ballots.

On Monday morning the *New York World*, the country's leading independent Democratic newspaper, which had come out for Wilson in May, appeared with a hammer-and-tongs editorial in great type: "WILSON—NO COMPROMISE WITH RYAN AND MURPHY!" Frank I. Cobb, chief editorial writer of the *World*, and a master of clear, forceful, simple English, was at his best in that plea to the convention to nominate Wilson as a "matter of Democratic life or death". The editorial helped to level the crumbling Clark defenses.

The end came on Tuesday, July 2.

Illinois and Indiana started the stampede. On the forty-sixth ballot Underwood's name was withdrawn and the Clark delegates were released. Wilson was nominated by acclamation. Tom Taggart's genial Hoosier protégé, Thomas Riley Marshall, was named for Vice-President. Gratefully, the worn and weary delegates left broiling Baltimore.

"I lost the nomination," asserted Champ Clark, "solely through the vile and vicious slanders of Colonel William Jennings Bryan, of Nebraska."

So it was that Woodrow Wilson drew closer to the high place for which George Harvey had claimed he was

predestined. Harvey, however, had subsequently backed Clark strongly, so he was now the loser.

Having done what he could, Col. House, something of a fatalist, had sailed for Europe when the battle of Baltimore began. He was on the high seas when notified of the nomination. He promptly cabled his delight.

It was a bubbling, jovial Wilson who greeted callers at Sea Girt. The nominee surprised the newspaper correspondents by passing around cigars. "That's the first box of cigars Woodrow ever bought," laughed Mrs. Wilson.

Soon the cottage at Sea Girt was overrun by visitors. Toward the end of July the Wilsons slipped away for a brief period of seclusion. They spent a few days at the lovely home of Melvin A. Rice in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, and enjoyed a short cruise aboard the *Corona*, Cleveland Dodge's yacht. Wilson wrote his acceptance speech in the Rice home. Mr. Rice recalls the nominee's enjoyment of Harry Lauder's songs on the phonograph. Wilson's appetite for the Scotch bard's drolleries was so great that the town had to be combed for all available Lauder records.

Wilson's spirits continued to be gay even during rough weather aboard the Dodge yacht where he recited:

I wish that my room had a floor;  
I don't so much care for a door;  
    But this walking around  
    Without touching the ground  
Is getting to be such a bore.

For Wilson the campaign was not arduous. Although McCombs had spent himself nervously and physically at Baltimore, he took on the duties of national chairman. William G. McAdoo became vice-chairman. The two men were at loggerheads continually. Their bickerings, however, were buried in the thunderous battering that Theodore Roosevelt and his Bull Moose brigade were giving Taft and the Republican Old Guard. Roosevelt's campaign was emotional. It held the flavor and fervor of a religious crusade.

The Colonel ramped up and down and across the land like a bull in a china shop, hitting all heads. He embraced most of Bryan's "isms" and added a few of his own, including the Initiative and Referendum and the recall of judges. He preached what he called the New Nationalism, under which a strongly centralized government was to protect the common man from what T. R. termed "aggrandized wealth". The program of the New Nationalism included the eight-hour day, minimum wage for women, abolition of child labor, a mothers' pension, a remodeled currency, direct election of United States Senators, the income tax, and a strengthened federal trade commission with power to curb illegal and monopolistic commercial practices.

Wilson matched the New Nationalism with another catch-phrase: the New Freedom. His program was not quite so radical as that of Roosevelt but contained many of the same proposals. No great gulf yawned between the social and political philosophies of the liberal candidates. But a gulf as wide as the ocean separated the two



in background, personal characteristics and methods of attack.

Roosevelt and Taft were so busy fighting each other that they had little artillery left for Wilson. The latter jogged calmly along in the middle of the road, refusing to get excited about anything that Roosevelt, in particular, said or did. Wilson despised Roosevelt's sword-rattling tactics. On the other hand Roosevelt, the ruddy, outdoor man, contemptuously regarded Wilson as a bloodless, timid product of the cloister.

When whispers were brought to Roosevelt's attention that Wilson had strayed upon the primrose path, and that this might be used against Wilson, the Colonel ordered his managers to squelch the rumors whenever possible. "We must have none of that gossip," declared T. R. Then, wrinkling his face into the inimitable puckered expression his friends knew so well, he added with a grin: "What's more, it wouldn't work. You can't cast a man as Romeo who looks and acts so much like the Apothecary's Clerk."

The salacious gossip, which was to be repeated with greater embellishment of detail in the 1916 campaign, concerned Wilson's friendship with Mrs. Mary Peck. Mrs. Peck, now Mary Hulbert, had obtained a divorce and had resumed the name of her first husband. She was still a gay ornament of Bermuda social life and still exchanging blithe letters with Wilson. In fact, the Wilsons were planning to take her house for a month after election.

The election went as expected. Although he received

but forty-two per cent of the popular vote, Wilson got four hundred and thirty-five votes in the Electoral College as against Roosevelt's eighty-one and Taft's eight. Roosevelt's popular vote was 600,000 greater than that of Taft.

During the presidential campaign Wilson held on to his job as Governor. He remained on the New Jersey payroll until March 1, 1913, three days before his inauguration. "I have enough Scotch in me for business purposes," he grimly told those who suggested that he resign as Governor.

Shortly after the election the Wilsons went to Bermuda for a month of comparative freedom. Upon his return, December 16, the President-elect fully realized the burdens of his new position. The modest cottage in Cleveland Lane, Princeton, which Wilson had rented furnished upon retiring from the university, was inundated with office-seekers and advisers, amateur and professional. So was the Governor's office in Trenton.

Details which bored him Wilson turned over to House and Tumulty and more and more sought counsel within himself. Newspaper men, with whom he had chatted so jovially during the campaign, now found him increasingly irritable, frequently inaccessible. Walter Hines Page, who often saw him at this time, reports "feeling the man's oppressive loneliness". Page it was who suggested that Wilson deliver his messages to Congress in person. Until he later adopted or rejected such suggestions his friends seldom knew what Wilson's attitude

was. Familiar with his temperament, many were fearful lest the burden prove too heavy.

Col. House, however, had no such fears. Often Wilson would slip away and join House at the latter's homey little apartment at Park Avenue and Fifty-third street, New York. Before the fire in the Colonel's soundproof den the two men would quietly talk things over and make important decisions. Amid the shocks and collisions of his everyday life Wilson found in House a spiritual haven.

Indeed, Wilson had need of a haven and clear, cool advice in considering the problems that were awaiting the next occupant of the White House. He knew that he must attack sanely and courageously the great powers that controlled industry and finance. He must seek to distribute wealth and credit more equitably for the benefit of the masses.

Throughout the land there was fear and hatred of the men, few but enormously powerful, who held sway over banks, railroads, water-power, oil, steel and other basic materials. These men had become stronger than government. To revise the tariff and the currency system, or to put through a broad program of social legislation, Wilson would have to build a personal machine greater than his party. Jefferson and Jackson had done it but these great Presidents had had no such tangled skein as Wilson to unravel. In 1913 the industrial and financial oligarchy was far more firmly entrenched than in Jackson's day.

Economic imperialism now ruled the United States.

Further, the industrial revolution had destroyed the country's isolation. American products were penetrating all parts of the world, competing with English and German. As far back as 1901 President McKinley had recognized the changing state of affairs. In his last speech at Buffalo, before he was shot by an assassin, McKinley had asserted frankly that the extremely high tariff policy of the Republican party must be changed to permit freer flow of exports.

American financial imperialism had penetrated deeply into the Latin countries to the south. The Monroe Doctrine, these countries had grown to fear, was simply a cloak for American aggression. Particularly was this belief held in Mexico, where millions of illiterate peons toiled for the benefit chiefly of American and European capital.

Under that magnificent brigand and iron-handed dictator, Porfirio Diaz, Americans had come into possession of \$600,000,000 worth of vast concessions in Mexico: oil fields, cattle ranches, mines, railroads, water-works and other public utilities. The total foreign investment, European and American, in Mexico, was upward of a billion dollars. In the spring of 1911, Francisco Madero led a revolution that forced Diaz to flee the country. Less than two years later, in February, 1913, the strongest of Madero's generals, Victoriano Huerta, had Madero assassinated and himself seized the government.

Huerta was wily, ruthless—and practical. He had none of Madero's dreamy idealism. Those who held rich concessions in Mexico knew that they could deal with

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Huerta and urged President Taft to recognize him. European governments clamored for the protection of their citizens in Mexico, holding this the duty of the United States under the Monroe Doctrine. With his term rapidly drawing to a close Taft refused either to recognize or to repudiate Huerta.

Another delicate problem of foreign relations concerned the Panama Canal. Congress had provided in the Tolls Act of 1912 that American coastwise shipping should be permitted free passage through the canal. Both Republican and Democratic parties had indorsed this preferential treatment. Great Britain contended, however, that when the canal project was first broached, the United States and England had agreed upon equal treatment for the ships of all nations. Other European nations supported England. The issue held the seeds of international discord. Also the railroads opposed preferential treatment of United States coastwise shipping.

Above all, from the point of view of a successful administration, was the necessity of obtaining the co-operation of Congress. In theory, Representatives and Senators are elected to serve the entire country. Actually, unless driven or led by a strong executive, each serves only his own locality or section. Repeatedly cabals and cliques have ruined the policies of Presidents. To score any sort of success a President must dicker and manoeuvre and reconcile the conflicting interests in his own party.

"A president," points out Prof. William E. Dodd, "must keep Congress, a majority of the country, and the

courts working together at least four years in order to be a moderate success. He must continue the co-operation and continue to go forward for eight years and then leave a successor of like mind in office if he would be a great President. It requires from eight to twelve years of successful administration in the United States to set up a tradition that will outlast the life of the leader who would impress his generation."

All these matters were engaging the President-elect as he awaited his entrance upon the great stage. In the recesses of his long, logical head Wilson was sorting, arranging, and planning a definite line of action.

The Wilsons planned to leave for Washington on Tuesday, March 3, the day before the inauguration. Closely though he had been identified with Princeton, Wilson had never seemed to take root in the town. The only property he owned was a cemetery lot. His relations with the university authorities were strained. Indeed he had refused to attend the inauguration of Dr. John Grier Hibben, his successor, whom he had never forgiven for opposing the Quad scheme. The university meanwhile had dropped most of the Wilson reforms.

Princeton was strangely unexcited over the Wilson departure. However, Col. David Flynn, local bank president and long a Wilson admirer, determined not to permit the occasion to pass without a celebration of some sort. Flynn asked Mrs. Wilson whether she thought the President-elect would appreciate the gift of a loving-cup from his fellow-townsmen.

"That would be lovely," said Mrs. Wilson. "Woodrow has never received a loving-cup."

Accordingly, on the night of March 2, Col. Flynn, Will Durner, the barber, and several hundred other citizens of Princeton gathered about the cottage in Cleveland Lane. The demonstration touched Wilson. Standing on the porch, holding his first loving-cup, he uttered a few words that were at once apt and a little pathetic.

"I have never been in the White House," he began, "and I shall feel very strange when I get inside of it. I shall think of this little house behind me and remember how much more familiar it is to me than that is likely to be, and how much more intimate a sense of possession there must be in the one case than in the other. One cannot be neighbors to the whole United States."

The speaker paused a moment, looked out into the shadows and went on:

"One day, after I became president of the university, I went into a shop and said, 'Won't you be kind enough to send that up?' I had made a purchase of a man with whose face I had been familiar for many years, and he said, 'What name, sir?' That was my single mortification, and that is the keenest kind of mortification; because if there is one thing a man loves better than another it is being known by his fellow-citizens."

The next morning the Wilsons left their little rented cottage and walked a half-mile to the railroad station where a special train was to take them to Washington—and a new life.





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*Chapter 10*

A TREMENDOUS

YEAR

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## CHAPTER TEN

### A TREMENDOUS YEAR

ON A DAY THAT SMILED WOODROW WILSON BECAME President of the United States.

Pomp and pageantry attend every presidential inaugural. That of March 4, 1913, was unusually colorful and dramatic. For the first time in sixteen years the Democrats were in power. From every section of the country the faithful poured into Washington to catch a glimpse of the man who had led the party out of the wilderness. The curious throngs saw an austere gentleman of fifty-six, slightly above medium height, with graying hair, whose face seemed gaunt, homely and a little forbidding in its serious mien. Two deep furrows, running upward from the mouth, accentuated this expression, which was brushed away only when he smiled.

Amid all the excitement of this great and gala day Woodrow Wilson never for an instant lost his poise. His manner was cool, almost casual. Beneath, however, burned the flaming spirit of the crusader.

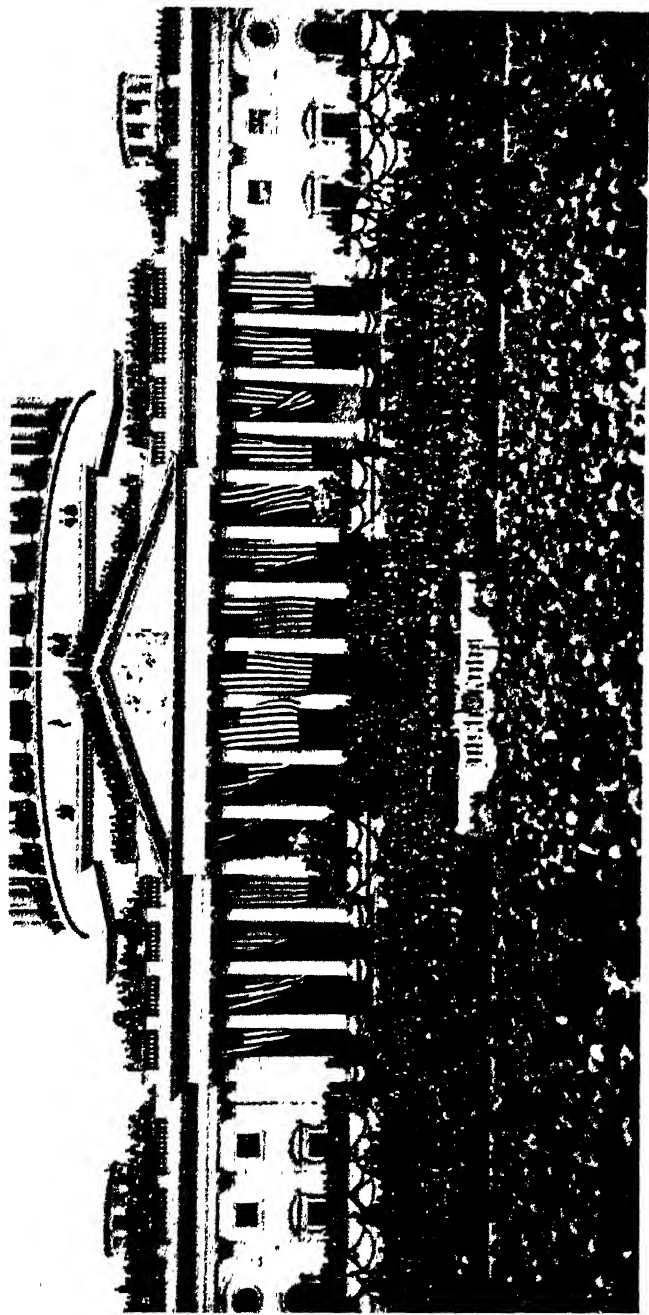
"This is not a day of triumph," he said in his brief inaugural address. "It is a day of dedication. Here muster not the forces of party, but the forces of humanity. Men's hearts wait upon us; men's lives hang in the balance; men's hopes call upon us to say what we will do. Who shall live up to the great trust? Who dares fail

to try? I summon all honest men, all patriotic, all forward-looking men to my side. God helping me, I will not fail them, if they will but counsel and sustain me!"

The inaugural address carried a note of reassurance to those who feared that Wilson intended to pull down long-standing pillars. Rather, he said, he would seek to restore the original intent of the Republic: government for the benefit of the many, not of the few. "The first duty of law," he pronounced, "is to keep sound the society it serves." He itemized domestic legislation he would propose to Congress: revision of the tariff, a federal reserve banking system, a farmers' loan bank.

After reviewing the inaugural parade, with its military units, bands and picturesque marching clubs, the new President went to his desk in the White House. The customary inaugural ball was omitted. The Wilson family foregathered at dinner and celebrated among themselves. The three daughters of the household, Margaret, Jessie and Eleanor, were now full-grown young ladies. After years in small college towns they were wonder-eyed at the new life opening before them.

That first night in the White House Ellen Axson Wilson, proud and happy, presided over a gay and festive board. With her self-effacing grace and charm Mrs. Wilson, as usual, looked after the comfort of everyone. Her brother, Stockton Axson, was there, as was the President's brother, Joseph R. Wilson, now city editor of a newspaper in Tennessee. Wilson's cousins, the Bones girls, came up from Georgia. In the kitchen was a special guest—Dave Bryant.



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THE FIRST INAUGURATION OF WOODROW WILSON MARCH 4, 1913



The first public statement of the new President was issued on March 5: "The President regrets to be obliged to decline to see applicants for office in person except when he himself invites the interview." This chilled regiments of office-seekers who had flocked to Washington.

Wilson was already bored and thoroughly disgusted with the pulling and hauling he had gone through in forming his cabinet. Political appointments, always foreign to his nature, now irked him beyond endurance. Wilson simply could not interest himself in the inside play of politics. His mind had to be free for bigger projects. He kept it free by turning matters of patronage over to Secretary Tumulty and to Col. House. The latter Wilson wanted to make his Secretary of State.

House wrote Wilson an affectionate note of refusal but offered to become "an ex-officio member" of the cabinet, adding: "I can do my share of work and get a little of the reflected glory that I am very sure will come to your administration." House, who from the beginning felt that Wilson was uncertain in his friendships, later remarked: "If I had been Secretary of State, every day a new gulf might have arisen between Wilson and myself. I could remain his informal adviser even if my advice were rejected. Had I gone into the cabinet I could not have lasted eight weeks."

Instead, House recommended Bryan for Secretary of State. On the surface this appeared a strange suggestion. At first Wilson balked. House pointed out that Bryan's influence with Congress would be essential in

putting through legislation. House records in his diary: "I called up Governor Wilson and he asked if I still held to my advice about Mr. Bryan, and I answered yes. This is the third or fourth time he has asked me this. It shows how distrustful he is of having Mr. Bryan in his cabinet."

Wilson's vacillations were caused largely by Mrs. Wilson's doubts. He was finally won over.

"Tumulty and House, from the outset, were enthusiastic friends of Bryan," writes James Kerney, in "The Political Education of Woodrow Wilson". "They recognized that it was Bryan's work at Baltimore that had given Wilson the nomination. On the other hand, Mrs. Wilson, who likewise fully appreciated that they were under heavy obligations to Bryan, was opposed to Bryan's coming into the cabinet. She had remarkable political intuition, as well as a splendid working knowledge of her husband's slant of mind. It was her idea that to have Bryan in the cabinet was unnecessarily inviting trouble. She insisted that a split between Bryan and Wilson was inevitable and that when it came it would alienate most of the Nebraskan's followers, while the appointment itself would antagonize the conservative Democrats at once.

"It was Mrs. Wilson's notion that some great honor should be found for Bryan, but she had come through the heartbreaking and nerve-racking struggle at Princeton and knew how difficult it was for her husband to get along with individuals. Wilson, on the other hand, spurred by Tumulty and House, took the position that



he owed Bryan so much for his work at Baltimore, particularly in view of the disclosures in the Joline letter, that he could do nothing but tender him the first place in the cabinet. He felt, too, that Bryan would not be a trouble-maker and that he would work well in harness."

Bryan's eccentricities always amused Wilson. The two men were at luncheon at the Sterling Hotel, Trenton, when the President-elect made his formal cabinet offer to Bryan. The Commoner grew pink with delight but suddenly sobered and expressed concern over the possible necessity of serving alcoholic beverages at State Department functions. Bryan, who was an immoderate consumer of food but who had never touched a drop of liquor, said his sense of Christian duty would not permit him to serve intoxicants.

Quite gravely, but with a glint in his eye, Wilson, who occasionally liked a glass of wine or a drink of whiskey, assured Bryan that his conscience need be his only guide. The President-elect also agreed that Bryan would not have to give up his beloved and lucrative Chautauqua lecture tours. And so the two Presbyterian elders, Bryan and Wilson, started off in perfect accord.

Wilson also stood out for a time against cabinet appointments for Josephus Daniels, North Carolina newspaper proprietor who had softened the effect of the Joline "cocked hat" letter on Bryan, and for William G. McAdoo, whose Wall-Street connections he feared. However, Thomas J. Pence, Washington correspondent popular with both Wilson and Tumulty, worked unceasingly for Daniels. One day, while walking with

Tumulty through the Trenton railroad station, Wilson suddenly capitulated, and Daniels became Secretary of the Navy. Wilson's doubts over McAdoo were finally resolved by House and Tumulty, and the New York promoter was made Secretary of the Treasury.

Wilson very much wanted Louis G. Brandeis in his cabinet. He admired the Boston lawyer's social philosophy and his work in exposing the New Haven Railroad scandal and others. In the campaign Brandeis had appealed tellingly to progressives to support Wilson rather than Roosevelt. However, certain banking interests in Boston, working through Cleveland H. Dodge, Wilson's principal financial backer, blocked the appointment. The Boston bankers, who took fright at very mention of Brandeis's name, convinced Dodge that Brandeis was a dangerous radical. Later Wilson appointed Brandeis to the United States Supreme Court.

The post of Secretary of Labor was offered to United States Senator William Hughes, of New Jersey. Hughes, blunt-spoken and jovial, had done yoeman work for Wilson at Baltimore. Self-educated, he had started as a mill worker in Paterson. He was one of Wilson's pet admirations. Hughes refused the labor post, recommending his friend, Representative William B. Wilson, of Pennsylvania, who was appointed. Hughes became Wilson's spokesman in the Senate.

All the cabinet members went through the House-Tumulty filtration process, though Wilson himself first suggested the name of William C. Redfield, of Brooklyn,

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as Secretary of Commerce. He was impressed by Redfield's tariff views.

Because he was a Quaker, A. Mitchell Palmer, of Pennsylvania, refused to become Secretary of War. Inauguration day was approaching and this was the last post to be filled. Wilson was at sea. He telephoned Tumulty. What happened then illustrates the extraordinary methods by which the first Wilson cabinet was selected. Tumulty told Wilson that he would suggest the name of "someone" within a few hours. In his interesting but worshipful volume, "Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him", Tumulty writes:

"I went to the library in my home in New Jersey and in looking over the *Lawyers' Diary* I ran across the name of Lindley Garrison, who at the time was vice-chancellor of the state of New Jersey. Mr. Garrison was a resident of my home town and although I had only met him casually and had tried a few cases before him, he had made a deep impression upon me as a high type of equity judge. I telephoned the President-elect that night and suggested the name of Lindley Garrison."

The keen Jim Kerney completes the picture:

"Wilson did not remember ever having heard of Lindley M. Garrison. But on the Tumulty representation he summoned Garrison to the State-house next day. Garrison had no inkling of the reason for his being invited. When Wilson, after a pleasant introduction and a brief sizing up of the man, tendered him the portfolio of Secretary of War, Garrison was stunned. He

pointed out that he was not in touch with political affairs and that he was occupying a pleasant judicial place for which he had fitted himself by long years of work. Furthermore it was just the kind of berth that suited both his ambition and his personal tastes. Wilson proceeded to argue that there was a larger duty in life than mere personal inclination and comfort and that Garrison owed it to his country to make any financial or other sacrifice involved. Garrison hurried back to Jersey City, packed his bag, and went with his wife to Atlantic City to think it over. Next day he accepted and three days later was on his way to Washington to assume command of the War Department."

Casual as was his acquaintance with Garrison, there were three other cabinet members whom the new President had never seen until he went to Washington: William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labor; Franklin K. Lane, of California, Secretary of the Interior; and James Clark McReynolds, of Tennessee, Attorney-General.

However, unique though its method of selection had been, Wilson's cabinet measured at least up to standard. High administrative ability was developed in many departments, while several cabinet members were of vital aid in putting through legislation.

Wilson showed even less interest in the scramble for foreign posts.

House, who loved to roam the world, was the chief patronage-dispenser in this field. It was he who 'phoned Walter Hines Page one morning and asked if Page would like to be Ambassador to England. Page was delighted.

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After his appointment he awaited the customary call to the White House for conference, but it never came. Wilson did not go in for embellishments.

It was House, too, who suggested that Henry Morgenthau, wealthy New York realty operator, who had contributed so lavishly to the Wilson campaign fund, be sent to Turkey. "There ain't going to be no Turkey," laughed Wilson, referring to the recent defeat of the Turkish Empire by the Balkan League. "Then let him go look for it," rejoined House.

Morgenthau, who had angled unsuccessfully for a cabinet berth, was not enthusiastic over the hunting expedition. He thought it unfair that Constantinople was the only post in the diplomatic service open to Jews. Wilson said he considered China and Turkey his two most important posts at that moment. "Then I'll take China," said Morgenthau, quickly. Wilson was a bit taken aback. Bryan, he said, had advised the appointment of an evangelical Christian for China. Morgenthau went to Turkey and made an excellent record.

James W. Gerard, another rejected cabinet possibility, landed the German ambassadorship. After backing Champ Clark to the tune of \$40,000, Gerard had cannily opened his purse-strings to Wilson.

Kerney tells an amusing story of the appointment of Thomas H. Birch, of New Jersey, as minister to Portugal:

Birch was an intimate friend of Bryan. His father, James H. Birch, a prosperous wagon-

builder, had stood by the Nebraskan in 1896 when Eastern business men, big and small, trembled at the mere mention of the Bryan name. A few weeks before his retirement from Trenton, Wilson, as a matter of compliment, had named the younger Birch as personal aide-de-camp on the Governor's staff, giving him the title of colonel. The only opportunity that Birch had to function as aide was at the inauguration of the President on March 4, 1913, when, although Wilson was no longer Governor, Birch appeared in Washington resplendent in a uniform patterned after the gorgeousness of the Philadelphia City Troop. Birch wanted to go to Brussels as American diplomatic representative. Bryan urged the selection, but Wilson balked and offered to name him to Persia.

Birch declined, and they finally compromised on Portugal. There was nervousness among the permanent staff of the State Department at the discovery that before leaving Washington Colonel Birch had stationery embossed "American Embassy, Lisbon," instead of "American Legation, Lisbon," but the incident only provoked a smile at the White House. When he was formerly presented to the Portuguese Government Colonel Birch again donned his impressive uniform, and this assured his diplomatic success. He was the ideal representative

at an Old World capital, out for a good time and ready to share it along the way. Fond of life, handsome and gracious, well-groomed, equipped with fine horses and a magnificent four-in-hand coach, there was none gayer, none more popular, in the diplomatic set of Lisbon. Wars might come and governments might change, but Colonel Birch was the friend of them all, entertaining lavishly at his mansion, minding his own business, and not interfering in Portuguese politics.

Hundreds of Bryan's friends, other than Birch, were given minor jobs in the foreign service. Bryan believed in rewarding those who had stuck by him in his three unsuccessful campaigns for the Presidency. Joyfully as a generous child with a plate of sugar-coated plums, he handed out jobs in the most remote corners of the earth to those who fell within his classification of "deserving Democrats".

Wilson, who had been criticized so often for not showing gratitude to his Democratic supporters, in one incident was very magnanimous—to a Republican. Told that William H. Cottrell, postmaster at Princeton, was preparing to follow precedent and make way for a Democratic successor, the President snapped: "Chip Cottrell always handled my mail well when I was at Princeton, and I am going to reappoint him."

However, weightier matters than Chip Cottrell's future engaged the new administration.

It was evident at once that Wilson was going to run a one-man show and make his own rules. He called Congress into extra session April 8, 1913, appeared in person before the two houses, and asked for a sweeping reduction of the tariff. Protectionist lobbies swooped down upon Washington and sought to maintain many schedules at the old level. But Wilson, with a safe working majority, held his party in hand. With surprising speed the Underwood-Simmons tariff bill was pushed through. The law reduced average taxes on imports from forty-two to twenty-six per cent.

Simultaneously a board was set up to make continuous tariff surveys. Prof. F. W. Taussig, outstanding tariff expert, became its chairman. An income tax law, authorized by recent constitutional amendment, was enacted as part of the Underwood-Simmons measure.

Wilson moved at once into the greatest of his domestic reforms, the Federal Reserve Banking and Currency Act. Wilson knew little of finance, but backed to the limit Carter Glass, chairman of the House Committee on Banking, Senator Owen, of Oklahoma, and Secretary McAdoo. These men were the chief architects of the act, which set up a new and flexible banking system. Under authority of the Federal Reserve Board, appointed by the President and supervised by the Treasury, the country was divided into twelve banking districts. The Reserve Board was given power to issue legal tender, distribute banking reserves, determine policies in times of crisis. The general purpose of the act was to destroy the growing concentration of wealth and credit which





(A) Brown Brothers.

# THE FIRST MEETING OF PRESIDENT WILSON AND HIS CABINET

*Left to right around the table: President Wilson, W. G. McAdoo, Sec'y. of Treasury; J. C. McReynolds, Att'y. General; Josephus Daniels, Sec'y. of Navy; D. F. Houston, Sec'y. of Agriculture; W. B. Wilson, Sec'y. of Labor; W. C. Redfield, Sec'y. of Commerce; Franklin K. Lane, Sec'y. of Interior; A. S. Burleson, Postmaster General; L. N. Garrison, Sec'y. of War; and W. J. Bryan, Sec'y. of State.*



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had tended to centralize in the hands of small and powerful groups in the East.

Enormous pressure from without was brought upon Congress to kill the Federal Reserve bill. The battle lasted most of the first summer Wilson was in office. One day in June, when the House and Senate banking committees had virtually agreed upon a favorable report, Carter Glass brought word to Wilson that the opposition of two Democratic Senators, Reed of Missouri, and O'Gorman of New York, threatened to block the progress of the bill.

"Glass, have we the votes to override these gentlemen?" Wilson asked.

Glass replied in the affirmative.

"Then outvote them, damn them, outvote them!" directed Wilson with set jaw.

A few days later McAdoo reported that Senator Root and other bitter opponents were determined to force adjournment, even through a filibuster, rather than permit the President's pet measure to become a law. It was a scorching day. Wilson was seated in a rocking chair on the White House portico. He wore a white Palm Beach suit. Looking out over the Potomac and the rolling hills of Virginia, Wilson shot out: "Mac, please say to the gentlemen on the Hill who urge a postponement of this matter that Washington weather, especially in these days, fully agrees with me. Tell them that unless final action is taken on the measure at this session I will immediately call Congress in extraordinary session."

That challenge stopped further talk of a filibuster.

Strangely enough, it was William J. Bryan, denounced for twenty years as a financial heretic, who finally swang the votes needed to put through the Federal Reserve Act. Once during the course of the battle Bryan threatened to resign from the Cabinet. He asserted that the bill did not give the government a strong enough hold upon the Federal Reserve System. Wilson sent Tumulty to see the Commoner. Bryan convinced Tumulty that he was right. Tumulty told Wilson so. The bill was changed. After the next cabinet meeting Bryan walked over to the chair in which Wilson was sitting and said in his most pompous manner: "Mr. President, we have settled our differences and you may rely upon me to remain with you to the end of the fight."

The following winter the administration put through its Anti-Trust measure. This forbade local price-fixing and exclusive agreements and abolished interlocking directorates in interstate corporations, railroads, and those banks and trust companies which came under the Federal Reserve System. The bill created the Federal Trade Board to regulate interstate business with the exception of the railroads. Labor unions and co-operative farmers' organizations were exempted from the jurisdiction of the Anti-Trust Law.

Congress turned down only one important Wilson proposal. It would not grant the Interstate Commerce Commission power to regulate the issue of securities by the railroads.

In his technical but gripping volume, "Woodrow Wilson and His Work", Prof. William E. Dodd thus com-

ments upon Wilson's successful handling of Congress: "Although he acknowledged that many of his party leaders were far from democratic, he assumed them to be disposed to give democracy a trial. If any of them threatened to be recalcitrant, it was quietly intimated that he would have to 'take the matter to the people'. Not since the days of Jefferson had there been such a complete master of men in Washington."

Although they stood somewhat in awe of Wilson's intellect, most of the Democratic leaders disliked him thoroughly as a man. One day Congressman Victor Murdock, Kansas Republican, was chatting with three prominent Democrats of the House—Kitchen of North Carolina, Underwood of Alabama, and Fitzgerald of New York.

"Say," asked Murdock, "what do you fellows make of Wilson anyway? How do you get along with him?"

The Democrats looked at each other and grinned. Kitchen said: "We never get near him." Underwood remarked: "We are no closer to him than you Republicans." Fitzgerald interjected: "He holds us at arm's length." Kitchen added: "He seems to think we are a lot of dirty politicians, contaminating and dangerous."

To those who took up his time unnecessarily, Wilson was curt, brusque, almost brutal. Often he dismissed garrulous callers with a stabbing "I know that" and turned his back. Above all, he appreciated brevity. "Of course I remember you," he said one day to Congressman Lewis, of Maryland. "You are the man who paid me the high compliment of assuming I could absorb an

idea in five minutes." Months before, Lewis had presented some proposal succinctly.

Much of Wilson's irritability flowed from physical and nervous handicaps. When he came to the White House, with his stomach pump and coal-tar headache tablets, he had incipient symptoms of Bright's disease. Under Dr. Cary Grayson's treatment this condition was checked. But Wilson's digestive organs were always weak. He could seldom eat with relish. Neuritis gripped him at times. Like his predecessor, Roosevelt, he had all but lost the sight of one eye. Roosevelt's affliction was caused by a blow; Wilson's, as we have pointed out, by a retinal hemorrhage. This possibly accounted for a certain lack of steadiness in Wilson's eyes, the curious shifty look that so many noticed.

Under Dr. Grayson, Wilson learned to conserve his strength. Grayson cajoled him into spending a couple of hours out of doors each day, walking, motoring or knocking a golf ball about on a public course. Wilson refused an invitation to join the fashionable Chevy Chase Golf Club because he dreaded meeting people who might talk shop. Knowing his physical frailty, Mrs. Wilson sought to shield her husband as much as possible. Along the passage-way between the White House and the executive offices Mrs. Wilson created a lovely little garden. Often on his way to the daily burdens she beguiled her husband into a stroll with her amid the flowers.

These burdens encompassed not only domestic affairs

## A T R E M E N D O U S   Y E A R

but problems that pressed for solution beyond the border.

In considering them Woodrow Wilson worked out a new and apparently naïve theory of foreign relations. The Wilson Doctrine was to have far-reaching effect upon the immediate destiny of the civilized world.





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*Chapter 11*

GOLDEN-RULE

DIPLOMACY

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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### GOLDEN-RULE DIPLOMACY

FOR MANY YEARS BEFORE WOODROW WILSON CAME into power the Flag had followed the Dollar.

American finance and industry had flung its influence into wide areas. Wherever possible we'd gotten our share of the swag in exploiting backward peoples. Under cloak of the Monroe Doctrine we had been able to penetrate Central and South America, with lush profit. We had also gone into the Far East. Mexico we dominated.

Always, from the days of McKinley, our business men had operated under a policy of imperialism. No matter where an American lived or had his money invested, benevolent and powerful Uncle Sam threw over him the shield of protection. It made little difference what sort of scalawag he was: he was an American citizen. Touch him and his property at your peril!

By luck of the draw Woodrow Wilson, a minority President, assumed power and the government's attitude was changed. Within a week after his inauguration Wilson began accommodating the foreign policy of the United States to his own ideas of moral measurement. It was not as a scholarly professor but as a stern devotee of the tenets of Calvinism that Woodrow Wilson preached a new foreign policy from his presidential pulpit.

The basic principles of this policy were:

First: All nations were to have the right of control over their internal affairs.

Second: Nationals of the United States must settle their difficulties according to the laws of the countries in which they resided.

Third: The United States would not recognize any government set up without the consent of the governed.

"My dream is," said Wilson in an early expression of personal idealism, "that as the years go on and the world knows more and more of America, it will turn to America for those moral inspirations which lie at the basis of all freedom; that the world will never fear America unless it feels that it is engaged in some enterprise which is inconsistent with the rights of humanity."

Wilson's sharp reversal of the imperialistic policy stunned and shocked financial leaders. New York banking houses promptly withdrew from a six-power Chinese loan arranged in the closing days of President Taft's term. The bankers sharpened their axes and bided their time. This Golden Rule diplomacy, they giped, was well enough for idealists and fools but would not work in practice. They prophesied that if trouble came Wilson would be found swinging the usual big stick.

Wilson calmly proceeded to apply his "Golden Rule" policy.

While he refused to recognize the Mexican dictator, Huerta, who had seized the government by force, he promptly welcomed the young Chinese Republic into the family of nations. He assured the Filipinos that, as

## GOLDEN - RULE DIPLOMACY

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soon as they were able to manage their affairs, every foot of their land "should be the home of free, self-governed people".

The pacifist Secretary of State, William J. Bryan, was whole heartedly in accord with the new doctrine. Bryan, of a more emotional religious nature than his chief, immediately set about drawing up universal arbitration treaties. These innocuous agreements were readily signed by most of the smaller nations in the western hemisphere and by all European countries except Germany. Germany maintained that her only safeguard was her ability to call upon unrestricted force if necessary.

Almost a year to the day after his inauguration Wilson put his Golden Rule policy to a grave test. He went before Congress and asked for the repeal of the Panama Tolls Act of 1912 granting free passage to American coastwise shipping through the Panama Canal. European countries held that the Hay-Pauncefote treaty of 1901 with Great Britain guaranteed equal treatment of all ships using the canal. The treaty had been loosely drawn, and the Taft administration had taken the position that the words "all nations" meant all nations except the United States. The platform upon which Wilson was elected confirmed this view.

Now, however, on March 5, 1914, Wilson boldly, almost threateningly, demanded that Congress repeal the Tolls Act. "I ask this of you," he said, "in support of the foreign policy of the Administration. I shall not know how to deal with other matters of even greater delicacy and nearer consequence if you do not grant

it to me in ungrudging measure. No communication I addressed to Congress has carried with it more grave and far-reaching implications to the interests of the country."

Though this pronouncement to Congress was rather cryptic and marked the first time that Wilson had used such strategy, he described his attitude more fully in private conversation with his secretary, Joseph Tumulty. The latter felt, as did Mrs. Wilson, that the President was making a serious blunder which would inevitably split his party.

"I must not count the effect of a move of this kind upon my own personal political fortunes," Tumulty quotes Wilson. "I am the trustee of the people and I am bound to take cognizance of the fact that by reason of our attitude on Panama Tolls our treaties are discredited in every chancellery of Europe, where we are looked upon as a nation that does not live up to its plighted word. We may have made a very bad bargain with England, but it will be all the more credit to us if we stand by an agreement even when it entails a sacrifice on our part. I ought not to be afraid, because of the antagonisms that will be created, to do my duty and risk my political future if necessary in righting a great wrong.

"We cannot expect to hold the friendship of the world, especially of England, France and Japan, if we are to treat agreements not as inviolable contracts but as mere matters of convenience, the plain terms of which are to be ignored when matters of expediency dictate.

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I know that the Irish, through the Hearst newspapers, will cry out that I have surrendered to England, that I am attempting to hand over to Europe a quasi-control over the Panama Canal. I realize, as you urge, that the leaders of our party will be found in opposition; but I must forget this and try to work the matter out so that at least I shall have done what is possible for me to do to right a great wrong."

The fight that followed was bitter. As Tumulty had predicted, important party leaders took their stand against Wilson. Every anti-British element in the country and a great many patriotic Americans heaped criticism upon the President. Cartoons were published showing him cringing before the British throne. Each evening Senator Ollie James, Tumulty and others met in Tom Pence's modest flat over a Chinese laundry at New York Avenue and Fourteenth Street and sought to hold the Administration forces in line.

Wilson held his ground and gradually won sufficient Republican support to overcome Democratic defection. The Tolls Act was repealed in June. It was a personal triumph of the highest magnitude for Wilson, who remarked solemnly: "When everything else about this Administration has been forgotten, its attitude on the Panama Tolls treaty will be remembered as a long forward step in the process of making the conduct between nations the same as that which obtains between honorable individuals."

Great Britain's show of gratitude was prompt. The British Government aided Wilson's efforts to eliminate

Huerta from the muddled Mexican situation. For over a year Huerta had been an irritating thorn in Wilson's side. Determined not to recognize the crafty old Indian dictator, Wilson had pursued toward Mexico a policy of "watchful waiting". Like so many felicitous Wilsonian phrases, "watchful waiting" was derided and jeered at by those who favored more vigorous action.

Meanwhile Mexico rapidly drifted into chaos. The cry for American intervention became stronger. Wilson, however, stuck to his determination to apply moral force only.

"Sometimes I have to pause," he said, "to remind myself that I am President of the United States and not of a small group of Americans with vested interests in Mexico. I am more interested in the fortunes of oppressed men, pitiful women and children, than in any property rights whatever. The people of Mexico are striving for the rights that are fundamental to life and happiness—fifteen million oppressed men, overburdened women and pitiful children in virtual bondage in their own home of fertile lands and inexhaustible treasure! Some of the leaders of the revolution may often have been mistaken and violent and selfish, but the revolution itself was inevitable and is right. The unspeakable Huerta betrayed the very comrades he served, traitorously overthrew the government of which he was a trusted part, impudently spoke for the very forces that had driven his people to rebellion with which he had pretended to sympathize. So long as the power of recognition rests with me the government of the United



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States will refuse to extend the hand of welcome to anyone who obtains power in a sister republic by treachery and violence."

When Venustiano Carranza and Pancho Villa organized a counter-revolution against Huerta, the United States gave them its tacit support. In February, 1914, Wilson lifted the embargo on arms. This helped Carranza and Villa to obtain American supplies. However, European traders had all along been supplying Huerta with ammunition. Watchful waiting traveled an uncertain course until two unexpected events forced Wilson into direct action.

American sailors from Admiral Mayo's squadron off Tampico went ashore to buy supplies on April 9, 1914. They were arrested by a group of Huerta's soldiers and detained an hour. Since two of the blue-jackets were taken from a navy whaleboat, technically American "soil", Admiral Mayo demanded a formal apology and a twenty-one-gun salute to the flag.

Huerta thumbed his nose, metaphorically speaking. Wilson stood back of Mayo and sent an ultimatum which Huerta ignored. While matters were in this critical state a German steamship approached Vera Cruz with military supplies for Huerta. Admiral Mayo notified Washington. In his work on Wilson, Secretary Tumulty tells graphically what happened in Washington:

About 2.30 o'clock in the morning of the 21st day of April, 1914, the telephone operator at the White House called me at my home,

and rousing me from bed, informed me that the Secretary of State, Mr. Bryan, desired to speak to me at once upon a very urgent and serious matter. I went to the telephone and was informed by Mr. Bryan that he had just received a wireless from Admiral Mayo, informing him that the German steamship *Ypirango*, carrying munitions, would arrive at Vera Cruz that morning about ten o'clock, and that he thought the President ought to be notified and that, in his opinion, drastic measures should at once be taken to prevent the delivery of these munitions to the Custom House at Vera Cruz. While Mr. Bryan and I were talking, Mr. Daniels, the Secretary of the Navy, got on the wire and confirmed all that Mr. Bryan had just told me. Soon the President was on the 'phone, and in a voice indicating that he had just been aroused from sleep, carried on the following conversation with Messrs. Bryan and Daniels and myself: Mr. Bryan reported to him the situation at Vera Cruz and informed him of the receipt of Admiral Mayo's dispatch in these words:

"Mr. President, I am sorry to inform you that I have just received a dispatch from Admiral Mayo that a German ship will arrive at Vera Cruz this morning at ten o'clock, containing large supplies of munitions and arms

for the Mexicans, and I want your judgment as to how we shall handle the situation."

Replying to Mr. Bryan, the President said: "Of course, Mr. Bryan, you understand what drastic action in this matter might ultimately mean in our relations with Mexico?"

Mr. Bryan said by way of reply: "I thoroughly appreciate this, Mr. President, and fully considered it before telephoning you." For a second there was a slight pause and then the President asked Mr. Daniels his opinion in regard to the matter. Mr. Daniels frankly agreed with Mr. Bryan that immediate action should be taken to prevent the German ship from landing its cargo. Without a moment's delay the President said to Mr. Daniels:

"Daniels, send this message to Admiral Mayo: *'Take Vera Cruz at once.'*"

As I sat at the 'phone on this fateful morning, away from the hurly-burly world outside, clad only in my pajamas, and listened to this discussion, the tenseness of the whole situation and its grave possibilities of war with all its tragedy gripped me. Here were three men quietly gathered about a 'phone, pacifists at heart, men who had been criticized and lampooned throughout the whole country as being too proud to fight, now without hesitation of any kind agreeing on a course of action that might result in bringing two na-

tions to war. They were pacifists no longer, but plain, simple men bent upon discharging the duty they owed their country and utterly disregarding their own personal feelings of antagonism to every phase of war.

After Mr. Bryan and Mr. Daniels had left the telephone the President said: "Tumulty, are you there? What did you think of my message?" I replied there was nothing else to do under the circumstances. He then said: "It is too bad, isn't it, but we could not allow that cargo to land. The Mexicans intend using those guns upon our own boys. It is hard to take action of this kind. I have tried to keep out of this Mexican mess, but we are now on the brink of war and there is no alternative."

Vera Cruz fell that morning. That was the beginning of the end for Huerta. He abandoned the capital on July 15. Half-full of brandy and cursing Wilson, the grizzled old dictator fled Mexico with some thirty boxes of gold. As a newspaper correspondent I talked with him just before he boarded a German cruiser at Puerto Mexico. Filling my hand so full of pebbles that I could not close it, Huerta spat out a Spanish proverb to the effect that Wilson, similarly, was seeking to hold more than he could handle. The last time I saw Huerta he was hoeing potatoes, with vast enjoyment, in the garden of a villa he had leased on Long Island.

Carranza entered Mexico City on August 20. Ameri-

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can troops had been withdrawn from Vera Cruz. For a time everything was tranquil in Mexico. Wilson continued his conciliatory policy and in a speech at Annapolis deprecated the employment of force. "Have not men fought since the world began?" he asked. "Is there anything new in using force?"

However, Mexico did not remain peaceful. Revolution again flamed. This time Villa declared war upon his former associate, Carranza. Before the end of the year the latter was forced to evacuate the capital. He did not regain control until October, 1915. Then the United States and the South American republics, invited into conference by Wilson, recognized Carranza as chief of a *de facto* Mexican government. Wilson said to Congress in December of that year: "Whether we have benefited Mexico by the course we have pursued remains to be seen. Her fortunes are in her own hands. We have shown that we will not take advantage of her in her distress."

In the two years that followed, Villa continued to be a menace. In March, 1916, he raided the little town of Columbus, New Mexico, killing several citizens and destroying much property. Wilson stilled the strident cries for war by having the militia of the border states called out for patrol duty and sending Brigadier General John J. Pershing and a small column of men from the regular army in pursuit of Villa. The expedition was fruitless.

In spite of the continuing disorders in Mexico and along the border, Wilson patiently followed his Golden-

Rule policy. Even the worshipful Tumulty's faith in Watchful Waiting weakened. He begged Wilson to clean up Mexico once and for all. One day the President summoned Tumulty into his study.

"Tumulty," he said, "you are Irish and therefore full of fight. I know how deeply you feel about this Columbus affair. Of course it is tragical and deeply regrettable from every standpoint, but in the last analysis I, and not the cabinet or you, must bear the responsibility for every action that is to be taken. I have to sleep with my conscience in these matters and I shall be held responsible for every drop of blood that may be spent in the enterprise of intervention. I am seriously considering every phase of this difficult matter and I can say frankly to you, and you may inform the Cabinet officers who discuss it with you, that there won't be any war with Mexico if I can prevent it, no matter how loudly the gentlemen on the Hill yell for it and demand it. It is not a difficult thing for a President to declare war, especially against a weak and defenseless nation like Mexico. In a republic like ours, the man on horseback is always an idol, and were I considering the matter from the standpoint of my own political fortunes and its influence upon the result of the next election, I should at once grasp this opportunity and invade Mexico, for it would mean the triumph of my administration. But this has never been in my thoughts for a single moment. The thing that daunts me and holds me back is the aftermath of war, with all its tears and tragedies. I

came from the South and I know what war is, for I have seen its wreckage and terrible ruin.

"I will not resort to war against Mexico," he continued, "until I have exhausted every means to keep out of this mess. I know they will call me a coward and a quitter, but that will not disturb me. Time, the great solvent, will, I am sure, vindicate this policy of humanity and forbearance. Men forget what is back of this struggle in Mexico. It is the age-long struggle of a people to come into their own, and, while we look upon the incidents in the foreground, let us not forget the tragic reality in the background which towers above this whole sad picture. The gentlemen who criticize me speak as if America were afraid to fight Mexico. Poor Mexico, with its pitiful men, women, and children, fighting to gain a foothold in their own land! They speak of the valor of America. What is true valor? I would be just as much ashamed to be rash as I would to be a coward. Valor is self-respecting. Valor is circumspect. Valor strikes only when it is right to strike. Valor withholds itself from all small implications and entanglements and waits for the great opportunity when the sword will flash as if it carried the light of heaven upon its blade."

Seldom was Wilson so intimate in expressing his views. Few outside his immediate family ever saw him in such revelatory mood. In vain did newspaper men try to catch him in these off moments. Wilson, recognizing the press as a necessary evil, was always distrustful and desired only to be let alone. Realizing that his position

made this impossible, he inaugurated bi-weekly conferences at which he fenced with the correspondents and gave them just as little news as he could. He dreaded these conferences so thoroughly that he abandoned them as soon as he had a plausible excuse.

Wilson's dislike of newspapers reached its height early in 1914 with the widespread publicity given to the engagement of his youngest daughter, Eleanor, to his Secretary of the Treasury, William G. McAdoo. The latter, a widower, was twice Eleanor Wilson's age. Shortly after the engagement was announced, Mrs. Wilson collapsed in her bathroom, which caused further speculation in the newspapers. At the next press conference, with a stenographer at his elbow, the President, in cold fury, took up the situation:

Gentlemen, I want to say something this afternoon. In the first place, I want to say that I know that in saying this I am dealing here in this room with a group of men who respect and observe the honorable limitations of their own function, but there are some men connected with the newspapers who do not. I am a public character for the time being, but the ladies of my household are not servants of the Government and they are not public characters. I deeply resent the treatment they are receiving at the hands of the newspapers at this time. I am going to be perfectly frank with you. Take the case of my oldest daughter.



It is a violation of my own impulses even to speak of these things, but my oldest daughter is constantly represented as being engaged to this, that or the other man in different parts of the country, in some instances to men she has never even met in her life. It is a constant and intolerable annoyance. These things are printed without any attempt to verify them by communication to the White House, and when explicit denials are received from persons who are known to tell the truth and to feel bound to tell the truth, those denials are not respected in the least. On the contrary, they are represented as avoidances.

Now, I feel this way, gentlemen: Ever since I can remember I have been taught that the deepest obligation that rested upon me was to defend the women of my household from annoyance. Now I intend to do it, and the only way I can think of is this. It is a way which will impose the penalty in a certain sense upon those whom I believe to be innocent, but I do not see why I should permit representatives of papers who treat the ladies of my household in this way to have personal interviews with me. They are entitled to all the news there is, and so far as even the ladies are concerned they are welcome to all that is true; but beyond that there is something that I cannot and will not endure, so far as I

can handle it. My daughters have no brother whom they can depend upon. I am President of the United States; I cannot act altogether as an individual while I occupy this office. But I must do something. The thing is intolerable. Every day I pick up the paper and see some flat lie, some entire invention, things represented as having happened to my daughters where they were not present, and all sorts of insinuations. When they are told that the person who is nearest to me in all the world is not seriously ill and is steadily recovering from a fall, they go about to create rumors that something is being concealed.

Now, if you have ever been in a position like that yourselves—and I hope to God you never will be—you know how I must feel, and I must ask you gentlemen to make confidential representations to the several papers which you represent about this matter. I do not want to take any action, particularly an action that will embarrass you gentlemen, and I am perfectly honest in saying that I do not believe you are in the least degree responsible for these things; yet I would not respect myself if I permitted this thing to go on.

Every day in my own household we have to recite to each other with embarrassment and resentment things that have appeared in the newspapers that are utterly false. I know you



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WOODROW WILSON AND HIS GRANDCHILD  
*In President Wilson's arms is the child of his daughter  
Eleanor, Mrs. William G. McAdoo.*



would like to co-operate with me in preventing that, for in some way it must be prevented. If you will resort to us whenever you hear rumors of any kind, we are perfectly willing to tell you anything that is true. For it is not a household in which there is anything to conceal. You would be welcome, so far as anything in the house was concerned, to see the inside of all correspondence that goes in or out of that house. And some men have tried to see the inside of that correspondence. Now, put yourselves in my place and give me the best co-operation in this that you can, and then we can dismiss a painful subject and go to our afternoon's business.

Although neither she nor the family suspected it, Ellen Axson Wilson had Bright's disease, which had been so feared for Wilson. She never recovered from her collapse.

There was many a poor home in Washington that missed her smile and the relief she brought. For Ellen Axson saw the great city's poor with the same sympathy that had welled in her sensitive heart in small communities. She was always her "lovely best", in the beautiful phrase of William Allen White. Wilson, too, as her strength ebbed, missed her uncanny good judgment and unfailing political acumen, to which he had invariably turned. Mrs. Wilson had always been able to soften the harsher side of her husband's nature. Indeed, she saved

him many a blunder. If his was the nimbler mind, hers was the stronger soul.

Wilson was left rudderless when she died on August 6, 1914. To a few friends he poured out his sorrow. One of these was Mary Hulbert, formerly Mary Peck, to whom he wrote: "I want you to be the first to know from me of Ellen's passing." To another friend he wrote: "She was the most radiant creature I have ever known. Something like an aura of light always surrounded her." Ellen Axson was laid at rest in her girlhood home of Rome, Georgia, where Woodrow Wilson, the young Atlanta lawyer, had courted her thirty years before. It was the saddest journey of Wilson's life. Truly, he was a lonely man.

Accompanying the agony of his personal tragedy was a world catastrophe—the Great War had broken out in Europe.

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*Chapter 12*

“HE KEPT US  
OUT OF WAR”

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## CHAPTER TWELVE

### "HE KEPT US OUT OF WAR"

EUROPE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD WOODROW WILSON WHEN the World War broke out was politely contemptuous. European statesmen regarded him as a political paradox—an odd sort of person who could rise to the top only in gay and adventurous America. His moralistic preachments on Mexico not only amazed them but seemed to them the pratings of a masculine Elsie Dinsmore.

Wilson, on his part, paid scant attention to Europe. His one-track mind was amply occupied with domestic issues and the Mexican problem. Willingly he turned over European affairs to House, whose interest in them was lively. House eagerly embraced the opportunity. This gave the little Texan wider fields for his unusual talents. Soon House became a sort of super-Secretary of State, receiving confidential reports from all the capitals of Europe and filtering information through to Wilson.

In the spring of 1914, armed with the most extraordinary letters, House went to Europe as Wilson's unofficial spokesman. It was the first of many trips abroad in that capacity. He saw no hint of the gathering storm in France nor England, but of Germany he wrote the President: "The situation is extraordinary. It is militarism run stark mad. Unless someone acting for you can

bring about a different understanding there is some day to be an awful cataclysm. No one in Europe can do it. There is too much hatred, too many jealousies."

Mistaking Col. House for a military man, the Germans proudly showed him their war-making machine in all its awesome glory. In vain House sought to convince them that his military title was purely honorary. In fact, the status of House was confusing to most European minds. Here was a man who was the personal representative of the President yet held no diplomatic post, a man called Colonel yet not of the army. Even the Kaiser mistook House's courtesy title and made a point of honoring him at an ancient military festival, the *Schrippenfest*. Doubtless these experiences colored House's impressions of Germany. When he returned to the United States he was anxious, but he little dreamed that Europe would explode in flames the first week in August.

The suddenness of the explosion caught Wilson in a vortex. As the Germans marched through Belgium he urged his countrymen to be neutral even in thought. He formally reminded Europe of the rights of neutrals and went so far as to offer his services as mediator—an offer which was ignored. Bloodthirsty Europe had little time for peacemakers.

America felt the effect of the war at once. After a brief period of confusion and semi-panic came a wave of unprecedented prosperity. Manufacturers were overwhelmed with war orders, the size of which made them dizzy. Factories were enlarged and re-enlarged, and

## "HE KEPT US OUT OF WAR"

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worked on a twenty-four-hour schedule. A great stream of gold poured into the country. Men became millionaires overnight. Bankers found their offices crowded with foreigners eager to borrow on any terms. The financial center of the world shifted from London to New York.

Immigration stopped. Labor was at a premium. Wages doubled and trebled. Hundreds of thousands of Negroes were imported from the fields of the South to the industrial centers of the North and West. Great numbers of women flocked into factories and offices. For the first time labor organizations realized their power. After years of struggle Samuel Gompers and other labor leaders came into their own and were able to dictate.

From the very nature of its population America could not be entirely neutral in sympathy. The majority of Americans were but two generations or less removed from Europe. Indeed, the four grandparents of the President himself had been born in the British Isles. Naturally people favored their mother countries. At once there sprang up two camps of almost equal strength, the pro-Ally and the pro-German. In the former camp, broadly speaking, was the older, more settled and more influential native stock. In the latter were not only millions of German-Americans but the bulk of Irish-Americans, violently anti-British, and many persons suspicious of England and all her acts.

At the outbreak of the war German *Kultur* had widely penetrated American colleges, medicine and science. Her business efficiency was being copied in our

factories and her military system served as a model at West Point. For many years German universities, admittedly the best in the world, had attracted thousands of American students. In 1914, if it had been necessary for America to take a side, a popular vote would have been close.

The two camps developed vast propaganda machines which sought to sway the predominant number of Americans who, no matter what their sympathies, were bitterly opposed to war. From both sides came showers of lies. It seems incredible now, in the light of twenty years after, that we swallowed and believed so many of them. In that time of fierce propaganda Wilson stood between the fires.

The President was well aware of his complicated position. One day his secretary found him comfortably seated in an armchair on the White House lawn. "We are going through deep waters in the days to come," Wilson remarked. "Passions now lying dormant will soon be aroused, and my motives and purposes at every turn will be challenged. Various racial groups in America will seek to lead us now one way and then another. We must sit steady in the boat and bow our heads to meet the storm."

Great Britain was the first to rock the boat. She set up a blockade against the Central Powers, forbidding even foodstuffs. It became more drastic weekly. Soon the British were seizing cargoes consigned to neutral ports, claiming these were destined for Germany. They blandly asserted that they were but following the pre-

edent established by Abraham Lincoln, who had blockaded Confederate ports during the Civil War; and proceeded to formulate even bolder measures. They searched American mail pouches and blacklisted American commercial firms. The United States seethed with indignation.

Wilson protested but to little avail. Treaties, he sadly realized, were indeed but scraps of paper, and both sides were throwing overboard long-accepted principles of international law. His one consuming ambition was to preserve peace. English and German statesmen soon set the American President down as a confirmed pacifist, and bluffable.

Meanwhile, in London, Ambassador Page was expostulating with Sir Edward Grey, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. “If you don’t stop these seizures, some day you will have your entire room papered with things like that,” he said, pointing to the wall where hung the framed \$15,000,000 check with which Great Britain paid the *Alabama* claims in the Civil War. Grey replied cautiously: “That may be so, but we will pay every cent. Of course, many of the restrictions which we have laid down and which seriously interfere with your trade are unreasonable. But America must remember that we are fighting her fight, as well as our own, to save the civilization of the world. You dare not press us too far!”

Page was to become as pro-British as Grey himself. The British Foreign Office grew to depend upon his advice as to when to take American protests seriously.

"Page's advice and suggestions," writes Lord Grey in his reminiscences, "were of the greatest value in warning us when to be careful or encouraging us when we could safely be firm. One incident in particular remains in my memory. Page came to see me at the Foreign Office one day and produced a long dispatch from Washington protesting our claim to act as we were doing in stopping contraband going to neutral ports. 'I am instructed,' he said, 'to read this dispatch to you.' He read and I listened. He then said: 'I have now read the dispatch, but I do not agree with it; let us consider how it should be answered!'"

Although the tug of his own blood was toward the Allies, Page's open Anglophobia exasperated Wilson. "Our men only last about six months in England," he remarked tartly. "Then they become Anglicized." More and more Wilson found it necessary to depend upon House for accurate information from London, indeed from every European capital. Though House, too, was an intellectual partisan of the Allies, Wilson felt that he could trust his views to be unbiased.

While critics of the British blockade were prodding Wilson, the German government on February 6, 1915, announced a submarine blockade of the British Isles. After the eighteenth of February submarines would sink Allied ships on sight. Neutrals traveled at their own risk on enemy vessels. This was retaliation upon Great Britain with a vengeance.

The American President warned Germany not to take American life or sink our ships. On February 20, he

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asked both Great Britain and Germany to give up submarines and mines except in and about harbors, and to pledge themselves not to use neutral flags as decoys. The President suggested that Great Britain permit food-stuffs to reach Germany's civilian population provided Germany guaranteed not to use the food for her armies. All these proposals were brushed aside.

Germany immediately began carrying out her submarine threat. On March 28 an American citizen went down with the torpedoed British steamer *Falaba*. On May 1 two other Americans lost their lives when the American vessel *Gulflight* was sunk.

The morning of May 7 Col. House was chatting with King George V in Buckingham Palace. The King, in referring to rumors that the Germans were prepared to make a spectacular demonstration of their submarine power by sinking a trans-Atlantic liner, asked: "Suppose they sank the *Lusitania* with American passengers aboard? What would happen?" House replied: "A flame of indignation would sweep across America that would in itself probably carry us into the war."

At two o'clock that afternoon, by a startling coincidence, the *Lusitania* was torpedoed and sunk without warning off the coast of Ireland and one hundred and twenty-four American lives were lost.

The deed stirred America to the depths. The earlier storms had been mere zephyrs in comparison. The very air crackled with cries for vengeance, even for war, upon Germany. In the midst of the uproar an unfortunate phrase cropped up in a speech Wilson made in

Philadelphia: "There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight." Tumulty, realizing its repercussive possibilities, sought unsuccessfully to have Wilson delete the pacifist phrase. This was on May tenth. "Too proud to fight" flared forth in headlines of every newspaper. Coming at this particular time, it infuriated the country.

As Wilson sat in his study framing the first *Lusitania* note he saw that the policy of watchful waiting, to which he had clung for three years, might no longer serve him. That note carried more than a hint of the big stick. It concluded: "The Imperial German Government will not expect the Government of the United States to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment."

Bryan signed the protest reluctantly, claiming that ships carrying ammunition or other contraband, as had the *Lusitania*, should not be permitted to transport passengers. After an unsatisfactory reply from Germany, Wilson wrote a second and stiffer note. Bryan, feeling that Wilson was driving us toward war, refused to sign it. Instead he resigned. In his letter of resignation, June 8, 1915, Bryan emphasized his personal friendliness for Wilson, adding: "The issue involved is of such moment that to remain a member of the Cabinet would be as unfair to you as it would to the cause which is nearest my heart, namely, the prevention of war."

Thus the inevitable split that Ellen Axson Wilson had



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foreseen came about. However, there was no bitterness. Despite their widely differing temperaments a certain fondness had grown up between Wilson and Bryan.

"Bryan's childish simplicity," comments James Kerney, "had endeared him to Wilson, just as it had given him a tremendous popular following. His attitude toward war was strangely inconsistent. In the Spanish-American conflict, Bryan recruited a regiment in Nebraska and was always exceedingly proud of his rank as colonel. And this ardent pacifist, firmly insisting that war was not in keeping with Christian statesmanship, requested that he be buried among the military heroes in Arlington Cemetery! He is the only pre-eminent preacher of peace who has been laid to his final rest, with the pomp and ceremony befitting a soldier, in this sacred burial-ground of America's great warriors."

The controversy over the sinking of the *Lusitania* and other acts of submarine violence continued for many months. Germany finally agreed not to sink ships without warning, unless the latter sought to escape or offered resistance.

Bryan's successor as Secretary of State was Robert Lansing, counselor of the State Department. All Wilson wanted was a good routine man who would not insist on the intrusion of his own opinions. Lansing was thoroughly aware that most of Bryan's state papers had been written by Wilson with House's aid.

Following the death of Ellen Axson, Wilson had retired more and more within himself. He saw as few people as possible. His brooding became almost hermit-

like. Except for an occasional round of golf with his physician and naval aide, Dr. Cary Grayson, he was seldom seen in public. He seemed morbid and nervous. Suddenly, in the spring of 1915, the President bloomed forth, at the age of fifty-eight, a gay and zestful young man. Wilson was in love.

The object of his affection was Mrs. Edith Bolling Galt, godmother of Dr. Grayson's heiress wife. The beautiful and fascinating Mrs. Galt was the widow of a Washington jeweler and herself a member of an old Virginia family. Through Dr. Grayson she had met Helen Woodrow Bones, the President's cousin, who was acting as mistress of the White House. The two became inseparable. Mrs. Galt dined often at the White House. She and Wilson were at once attracted to each other. Indeed it was love at first sight.

Wilson emerged from his shell and courted Mrs. Galt with the ardor of a young swain. One would have thought the tender passion had touched him for the first time, so eager was his amorous pursuit. The announcement of the President's engagement, coming within ten months of Ellen Axson's death, shocked and alarmed his advisers. Only Tumulty dared suggest that the marriage be postponed until after the 1916 campaign—a suggestion disastrous to him. Tumulty's relations with Wilson were never so intimate thereafter.

The Senate was not a little amazed when Wilson nominated Dr. Grayson for Rear-Admiral, a rank just 117 numbers above his own rank then. The Senate refused the promotion, holding it unfair to veteran



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MRS. EDITH BOLLING WILSON



officers in active service. Wilson was adamant. The Senate finally yielded. Young Grayson became a Rear-Admiral. “Admiral of what?” someone inquired. “Why, Admiral of the Boudoir,” a Washington wit replied.

Wilson spent the summer of 1915 at Cornish, New Hampshire. The Graysons and Mrs. Galt accompanied him. The President had never been in finer fettle. His physical condition was astonishing. He and his fiancée were constantly together. The worries of Washington and the tragedy of Europe seemed very, very far away.

The President and Mrs. Galt were quietly married in Washington on December 18, 1915. After a brief honeymoon at the famous Hot Springs of Virginia they returned to the White House. During the eight remaining years of Wilson’s life his wife never left his side. Her help and influence were enormous.

Mrs. Wilson accompanied her husband in January and February, 1916, on a tour of the West in behalf of preparedness. After a year of indecision Wilson had finally determined that the United States must greatly enlarge its army and navy. In the matter of preparedness Wilson again found himself between two clamorous groups. On the one hand were pacifists of the Bryan type who insisted that embattled farmers with pitchforks could repel any possible invaders of American shores.

On the other hand, Theodore Roosevelt, General Leonard Wood and others were thundering demands for the adoption of compulsory universal military service. The Roosevelt-Wood group was backed by promi-

nent citizens and newspapers and by defence and security leagues which organized parades, sent out lecturers and carried on other forms of propaganda. Admiral Peary sent shivers down the backs of Chicago audiences by predicting that within twelve months German airplanes would be showering bombs upon their city.

During the preparedness tour Wilson's vigorous and warlike utterances surprised the country. He went so far as to advocate for the United States "incomparably the greatest navy in the world." In his pleas for a larger army he carefully avoided the term "universal military service." In Des Moines on February 1 he said: "I call you to witness, my fellow-countrymen, that I have spent every thought and energy that has been vouchsafed me in order to keep this country out of war. It cannot be disclosed now, perhaps it never can be disclosed, how anxious and how difficult the task has been, but my heart has been in it."

The speaker undoubtedly referred to a peace mission which at that time had taken House to Europe. The Colonel's fertile mind had incubated a scheme to end the war. His idea was that the Allies, when they thought the time propitious, should secretly notify Wilson, who would propose, seemingly upon his own initiative, a conference of all the belligerents. The Allies, of course, would accept. If Germany refused, "the United States would *probably* enter the war against Germany." Wilson insisted upon inserting the qualifying "probably" in the informal agreement between House and the British.

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The whole scheme, about which there has been so much speculation, fell to the ground because the French ignored it. It shows clearly, however, how far the sympathies of Wilson and of House had drifted fourteen months before America entered the war and nine months before the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War" helped to re-elect Wilson.

Returning to Washington, Wilson found Congress balking at a preparedness report submitted by Secretary of War Garrison. The report recommended an increase in the regular army to 142,000 men and immediate organization of a new "continental army" of 400,000. Huge quantities of war material and reserves of state militia were provided. Since Wilson had tentatively supported the Garrison plan in his message to Congress the preceding December, the Secretary naturally assumed that he would have the President's backing. Angered at Wilson's refusal to whip Congress into line, Garrison resigned. It was generally felt that the cabinet had lost a strong man. Nor were the critics mollified when Newton D. Baker, of Cleveland, Ohio, was appointed Garrison's successor.

Baker was a left-wing Democrat, a disciple of Tom Johnson, Cleveland's famous liberal mayor, and a philosophical pacifist. He was of the type Wilson liked, quiet, efficient and self-effacing. Baker soon became an influential force in the Cabinet and a close personal adviser of the President. Although loathing the whole business of war, he was to surprise and amaze the world

by his magnificent conduct of the war department in those electric years that followed.

When the Democratic convention met at St. Louis in June, Wilson's renomination was inevitable. Convention orators drummed a single theme: Wilson's success in preserving neutrality and keeping America out of the war. The gigantic Ollie James, of Kentucky, the permanent chairman, rolled out in his deep, rich voice:

Four years ago they sneeringly called Woodrow Wilson the school teacher; then his classes were assembled within the narrow walls of Princeton College. They were the young men of America. Today he is the world teacher, his class is made up of kings, kaisers, czars, princes and potentates. The confines of the schoolroom circle the world. His subject is the protection of American life and American rights under international law.

Without orphaning a single American child, without widowing a single American mother, without firing a single gun, without the shedding of a single drop of blood, he has wrung from the most militant spirit that ever brooded above a battlefield an acknowledgment of American rights and an agreement to American demands.

The delegates shouted wildly for a repetition of the last sonorous sentence. Senator James mopped his brow and obliged.



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The spirit of peace hovered over the St. Louis convention. The beaming Bryan, though not a delegate, was invited to make an address. He placed his apostolic blessing upon Wilson in these words: "I have differed with the President in some points of his policy in dealing with the great war, but I agree with the American people in thanking God we have a President who has kept—who will keep—us out of war."

Thus grew the slogan "He Kept Us Out of War" which bloomed on thousands of billboards that fall. Incidentally, though he reaped the full benefit of the phrase, Wilson himself never used it. Bryan used it constantly on the stump and Bryan's speeches played a great part in winning the West for Wilson.

In 1916 the Republican factions, that had called each other horsethieves and worse four years before, united to trip Wilson. Theodore Roosevelt patched up a truce with the Republican Old Guard and led back into the fold as many of his bolting 1912 Progressives as he could. Roosevelt hoped the lightning would strike him, but the animosities of 1912 were too great. After much wrangling Charles Evans Hughes became the nominee.

Hughes, in the seclusion of his place on the Supreme Court bench, had avoided party feuds. This gave him the advantage—rather negative, it turned out—of not having expressed his views on any active question. In temperament and intellectual capacity the Republicans could not have put up a man more similar to Wilson. However, Hughes utterly lacked Wilson's magic touch with words. His speeches were solid and heavy. It was

typical of Hughes, who with his family was on intimate social terms with the Wilsons, to send an abrupt and curt note of resignation to the White House by a Negro messenger. The note was addressed merely "To the President" and read: "I hereby resign the office of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States."

While Hughes barnstormed over the country Wilson in September went with his bride to Shadow Lawn, a beautiful mansion at Elberon, New Jersey, and settled down for a second honeymoon, if, indeed, his first had ever ended. The outcome of the campaign and the situation in Europe seemed to rest lightly upon him. Almost jocularly he remarked to a visitor: "I wish someone would tell me what the Allies are fighting for."

Even cabinet members found it difficult to gain his ear that fall. Pressing matters were submitted to him in memoranda through Tumulty, who saw him only occasionally. Wilson visited but once the temporary executive offices set up by Tumulty in nearby Asbury Park. The Democratic managers, alarmed at his apathy, finally persuaded him to make weekly speeches from his porch.

Hughes attacked Wilson for vacillating foreign policies. Wilson retorted with vast effectiveness: "If you give that gentleman rope enough he will hang himself. If the Republicans radically change our foreign policy there is only one choice as against peace, and that is war."

The Republican managers were flirting with the so-called hyphenated vote. Wilson, cognizant of their

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schemings, made a magnificent political play. One day he summoned the newspaper men from Asbury Park and gave them his reply to a telegram from Jeremiah O'Leary, a violent anti-British leader in Irish-American circles. O'Leary had wired that he looked with joy upon Wilson's coming defeat. Wilson's answer read: "I would feel deeply mortified to have you or anybody like you vote for me. Since you have access to many disloyal Americans and I have not, I will ask you to convey this message to them." The larger part of American opinion applauded the rebuke heartily.

Into the campaign, again, came lively rumors of Mary Hulbert (Peck). They ran rife. At one moment the fair lady was being taken to Europe by Colonel House so Wilson would not be embarrassed in his new marriage. The next moment she was receiving a handsome salary in the Treasury Department. There were tales of lush sums paid to her for Wilson's "love letters". In fact Louis D. Brandeis was credited with having received his place on the United States Supreme Court bench in appreciation of his artful means of retrieving the letters. These rumors, which to this day lack a shred of confirmation, were eagerly believed. By his early remarriage Wilson created a new and popular conception of himself as a Romeo. The Peck-Hulbert mystery lent him the glory of a Don Juan—an anomalous rôle for a scholarly man approaching sixty.

A dark cloud loomed in the midst of the campaign. A national railroad strike threatened. The most powerful arm of organized labor in America—the great

brotherhoods of railway engineers, firemen, conductors and trainmen—demanded an eight-hour day. The railroad managers refused. Conscious of their strength, the brotherhoods determined upon a strike to begin the first week in September. Wilson summoned both sides to Washington. His pleas for arbitration fell upon deaf ears. Gathering the railroad managers about him in the cabinet room he made a final appeal.

"Gentlemen," he said, "a nation-wide strike at this time would mean absolute famine and starvation for the people of America. You gentlemen must understand just what this means. Will your interests be served by the passions and hatreds that will flow from such an unhappy condition in the country? If this strike should occur, forces will be released that may threaten the security of everything we hold dear. For, my friends, beneath the surface in America there is a baneful seething which may express itself in radical action, the consequences of which no man can foresee. In asking your co-operation to settle this dispute I am but striving, as we stand in the shadow of a great war, to keep these forces in check and under control."

The President paused, lowered his voice to a solemn pitch and went on:

"The war is a world cataclysm and before it ends it may unsettle everything fine and wholesome in America. We of America, though we are cut off from its terrible sweep, cannot be unmindful of these consequences. We must keep our own house in order so that we shall be prepared to act when action becomes necessary. Who

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knows, gentlemen, but by tomorrow a situation will arise where it shall be found necessary for us to get into the midst of this bloody thing? You can see, therefore, that we must go to the very limit to prevent a strike that would bring about a paralysis of the arteries of trade and commerce. If you will agree with me in this matter, I will address Congress and frankly ask for an increase of rates and do everything I can to make up for the loss you may sustain. I know that the things I ask you to do may be disagreeable and inconvenient, but I am not asking you to make a bloody sacrifice. Our boys may be called upon any minute to make that sacrifice for us."

Still both sides refused compromise.

With no time to lose, Wilson took the side of labor. He went before Congress and forced through the Adamson Law, compelling the railroads to adopt the eight-hour day. It is significant here to note that the Adamson Law empowered the President, in the event of military necessity, to seize and operate the railroads. During the same summer passage of the National Defense Act, which vastly expanded the army and the navy, also gave the President definite military powers. Wilson was early preparing, in the event of war, to hold the reins.

The Democratic campaign managers made the most of Wilson's advocacy of the eight-hour law. Their last appeal was addressed to labor: "You are working, not fighting; alive and happy, not cannon fodder; Wilson and peace with honor, or Hughes with Roosevelt and war! If you want war vote for Hughes. If you want

peace with honor and continued prosperity, vote for Wilson."

As election day approached it was evident the issue was to be close. House had written to Wilson on October 20:

Dear Governor:

If Hughes is elected—which God forbid—what do you think of asking both Lansing and Marshall to resign, appoint Hughes Secretary of State, and then resign yourself? That would be a patriotic thing to do. Such a procedure would save the situation from danger and embarrassment.

Affectionately yours,

E. M. HOUSE

The idea appealed to Wilson and, in the event of defeat, he decided to do as House advised.

Dramatic events tumbled over each other on election night, Nov. 7, 1916. Scattering early returns favored Wilson. Soon the tide turned, indicating a great drift to Hughes in the East and Middle West. At nine-thirty o'clock the *New York World*, Wilson's strongest newspaper supporter, conceded the election of Hughes. "Well, Tumulty," said Wilson over the 'phone from Shadow Lawn—the secretary swears he chuckled—"it begins to look as if we have been badly licked." Tumulty was keeping vigil at Asbury Park. Shortly after his talk with the President, Tumulty was called to the 'phone.

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"At the other end of the wire in New York," recalls the secretary, "was an individual who refused to give his name. He described himself simply as a friend of our cause. I thought at first that he was a crank. But something about his talk convinced me that he was in close touch with someone in authority at Republican headquarters. In his first talk with me and in subsequent talks that night and the following day there was a warning to us in no way or by the slightest sign to give up the fight or concede Hughes' election. He said: 'Early returns will naturally run against Wilson in the East,' and intimated that the plan at Republican headquarters would be to exaggerate these reports and to overwhelm us with news of Republican victories throughout the country. Continuing his talk he said: 'The Wilson fight will be won in the West. I shall keep you advised of what is happening in Republican headquarters. I can only tell you that I will *know* what is happening and you may rely upon the information I shall give you.'"

All night long the mysterious stranger continued to 'phone heartening messages. Although Tumulty was never to know his identity, the informant came to the White House months later and revealed that he had been able, in some undisclosed manner, to listen in upon the private wires of the Republican National Committee.

Toward midnight the *Brooklyn Eagle* and the *New York Times* both conceded Hughes's election. The Republican candidate went to bed at the Hotel Astor apparently President-elect of the United States. He woke

up a very bewildered private citizen—our “Tuesday President”, the famous newspaper wit, Bugs Baer, called him. Wilson votes were hurtling in from the West, particularly California where Hughes had made a now historic blunder in ignoring Hiram Johnson, idol of the coast Progressives. California decided the election. The electoral vote was 277 for Wilson and 254 for Hughes.

Wilson, on the other hand, went to bed believing himself again a private citizen, rather enjoying his new sense of freedom. Next morning as he was shaving and humming softly to himself, his daughter, Margaret, tapped on the door of the bathroom. “Oh, father,” she called, “there’s an extra out, of the *New York Times*, which says that you have probably won!”

“Go tell it to the marines,” Wilson called through the door, good-naturedly, and continued to shave.

In Europe the death grapple was tightening. There were new and irritating invasions of American rights by both England and Germany. Not a cargo could leave an American port without Allied sanction.

The time for effective protest was past. The entire commercial fabric of the United States was now intertwined with that of the Entente.

Germany planned the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare. Her war lords were confident their submarines, unhampered by any rules whatsoever, could cut off the Allies’ supplies and win the war before America could mobilize.

As a startling demonstration of undersea power, the



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German super-submarine U-53 had arrived off the New England coast and speedily taken a toll of six ships.

Would Woodrow Wilson remain The Man Who Kept Us Out of War?



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*Chapter 13*

MAKING THE  
WORLD SAFE  
FOR DEMOCRACY

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## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

GERMAN AMBASSADOR VON BERNSTORFF HAD IN HIS possession a fateful announcement from his government that awaited a cabled order for release.

At sundown on January 31, 1917, von Bernstorff walked sorrowfully into the State Department and served notice that unrestricted submarine warfare, more drastic than before, would be renewed the following day. Neutral vessels attempting to trade with the enemies of Germany would be sunk on sight. America might send one ship a week to England, painted as Germany specified. "Give us only two months of this kind of warfare," Germany's foreign secretary, Zimmermann, in Berlin, boasted to the American Ambassador, Gerard, "and we shall end the war and make peace within three months."

During the preceding weeks Wilson had made two unsuccessful moves to negotiate peace. He had asked all the belligerents to clarify their war aims and advocated "peace without victory" through world application of the Monroe Doctrine.

Yet slowly and surely did the net of war gather about Wilson and his Golden Rule.

Diplomatic relations with Germany were broken off

on February 3. Wilson still refused to fight. In fact, the day before von Bernstorff was given his passport the President told his cabinet: "I don't wish to see either side win. Both have been equally indifferent to the rights of neutrals, though Germany has been brutal in taking life and England only in taking property."

Great Britain now played a trump card. She turned over to Wilson a highly sensational message from Zimmermann to the German minister in Mexico which she had intercepted at four different points. Dated January 16, it read:

We intend to begin on the first of February unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavor in spite of this to keep the United States of America neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal of alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support, and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. The settlement in detail is left to you. You will inform the President [of Mexico] of the above most secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the United States is certain and add the suggestion that he should, on his own initiative, invite Japan to immediate adherence and at the same time mediate between Japan and ourselves. Please call the President's attention

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to the fact that the ruthless employment of our submarines now offers the prospect of compelling England in a few months to make peace.

Published in the newspapers February 28, the fantastic Zimmermann proposal created a veritable explosion. Pro-Germans denounced it as a forgery. When Zimmermann confirmed its authenticity he unlocked the floodgates of vengeance in America. A frenzied cry for war beat against the White House. The powerful financial and industrial interests, already enraged at the submarine blockade, grew apoplectic. Newspapers shouted for action, as did influential leaders in both parties.

Col. House and cabinet members advised Wilson that there was but one course open—war. The President's mind fully grasped this, but tenaciously he clung to the hope that in some way, somehow, a method could be found to keep out of the conflict.

Woodrow Wilson's aversion to war was physical as well as spiritual. He paled at the mere mention of blood and his nervous system rebelled. This had been true all his life. As each day brought nearer our entry into the world quarrel "the man who kept us out of war" grew perceptibly paler. "If I could only get away from it all," he told a caller, "I believe I could sleep and sleep like Dickens' Fat Boy."

The President was privately sworn in for his second term on Sunday, March 4, 1917. The public ceremony

came next day, when Wilson told a crowd before the Capitol: "There are many things to do at home . . . and we shall do them as time and opportunity serve; but we realize that the greatest things that remain to be done must be done with the whole world for stage and in co-operation with the wide and universal forces of mankind, and we are making our spirits ready for those things. They will follow in the immediate wake of the war itself and will set civilization up again. We are provincials no longer."

In spite of Wilson's indecision every branch of the government geared itself for war. "As far as we are concerned," Col. House from Washington wrote to Ambassador Page in London on March 21, "we are in the war now, even though a formal declaration may not occur until after Congress meets, April 2. All the departments are preparing as rapidly as possible."

Nightly House sat with Wilson before the fire in the White House study and sought to brush away with velvet words his friend's doubts. Wilson deplored his temperamental unfitness as a war President. He spoke even of resigning. When his Postmaster-General, Burleson, told him that the people were demanding war, Wilson snapped: "It does not make so much difference what the people wish as what is right." As April 2 approached, the pressure became greater. Wilson talked of postponing the convening of Congress until a later date.

On the night of March 31 the President stirred restlessly in his bed. Finally he rose, donned bathrobe and slippers and took his small typewriter out on the south



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portico of the White House. Mrs. Wilson, hearing him, slipped into the kitchen and prepared a bowl of milk and crackers which she silently placed at his side. There, in the stillness of the night, Wilson wrote his war message. In this great state paper he asked only that Congress recognize the existence of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government. He still could not bring himself to ask a positive declaration of war. The fine distinction was a last futile compromise with his conscience.

Sleep did not touch Wilson that night.

The next day the President showed his message, in strict confidence, to several men whose judgment he respected. Nervous and worn he said to Frank Cobb, chief editor of the *New York World*: "What else can I do? Is there anything else I can do?" Cobb saw no way out save war.

The President said a declaration of war would mean that Germany would be so badly beaten that there would be a dictated peace. "It means," he said, "an attempt to reconstruct a peace-time civilization with war standards, and at the end of the war there will be no bystanders with sufficient power to influence the terms. There won't be any peace standards left to work with. There will be only war standards." Then Wilson began to talk about the consequences to the United States. He said that when a war got going it was just war and there weren't two kinds of it. He thought the Constitution would not survive it; that free speech and the right of assembly would go. He said that a nation could not put



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be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts: for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for universal dominions of right by such a concert of free people as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

"To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness, and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

The concluding sentence was an echo of Martin Luther's ringing appeal to Charles V at the Diet of Worms: "God helping me, I can do no other!"

Pennsylvania Avenue was lined with crowds who cheered and shouted approval as Wilson rode back to the White House. "How strange to applaud a message of war," the President remarked. "A message of death for our young men."

Back in the White House he dropped wearily into a chair in the cabinet room with only Tumulty present. After a long silence he said: "Tumulty, from the very beginning I saw the end of this horrible thing. Now we must prepare for the inevitable, a fight to the end. There were very few who understood my policy of patience."

He paused a moment, then continued: "There is a fine old chap in Springfield, Massachusetts, who has understood and sympathized with me throughout this whole business. I want you to read a letter from him." The President drew from his pocket a letter from Waldo L. Cook, editor of the *Springfield Republican*:

Springfield, Mass.,  
March 28, 1917

My dear Mr. President:

In acknowledging your very kind and appreciative note of March 22, I must say at once that the note has given me the greatest possible pleasure. I prize this word from you all the more because after the political experience and conflicts of the past few years, I am conscious of a very real yet peculiar feeling of having summered and wintered with you, in spite of the immeasurable and rather awful distance that separates our respective places in the life and work of our time. Your note, for the moment, suddenly annihilates the distance and brings to me what I recognize as a very human touch. There is summering and wintering to come—with more wintering perhaps than we shall enjoy. Even so I shall hope to be of timely service as opportunity favors me.

I have the honor to be your admirer and friend,

Most sincerely,  
(signed) WALDO L. COOK  
[ 236 ]

APR 17 1917



## Sixty-fifth Congress of the United States of America;

At the First Session,

Began and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the second day of April,  
one thousand nine hundred and seventeen.

### JOINT RESOLUTION

Declaring that a state of war exists between the Imperial German Government  
and the Government and the people of the United States and making  
provision to prosecute the same.

Whereas the Imperial German Government has committed repeated acts of  
war against the Government and the people of the United States of  
America: Therefore be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States,  
of America in Congress assembled, That the state of war between the United  
States and the Imperial German Government which has thus been thrust upon  
the United States is hereby formally declared; and that the President be, and  
he is hereby, authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military  
forces of the United States and the resources of the Government to carry on war  
against the Imperial German Government; and to bring the conflict to a  
successful termination all of the resources of the country are hereby pledged by  
the Congress of the United States.*

*Champ Clark,*

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

*Thos. R. Marshall*

*Vice President of the United States and  
President of the Senate.*

*Approved 6 April, 1917*

*Woodrow Wilson*

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FACSIMILE OF THE DOCUMENT THAT  
MADE WAR BETWEEN THE UNITED  
STATES AND GERMANY A FACT



## MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

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As Tumulty read, great tears welled in Wilson's eyes. "That man understood me," he said chokingly. His overwrought nerves gave way. His head dropped into his arms on the cabinet table. He sobbed.

Twice in his war message Wilson insisted that the United States had no quarrel with the German people. "We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship," he said. "It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war." This adroit attitude, constantly maintained throughout the war, iterated and reiterated, finally proved more potent than bullets in undermining enemy morale.

Wilson referred also in his war speech to the first Russian revolution of a fortnight before. Rejoicing in the downfall of the Czar and the rise of the social democratic government, he said:

Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia? Russia was known by those who knew it best to have been always in fact democratic at heart, in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude toward life. The autocracy that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had

stood and terrible as was the reality of its power, was not in fact Russian in origin, character or purpose; and now it has been shaken off and the great, generous Russian people have been added, in all their native majesty and might, to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a league of honor.

Wilson did not know that even then Nicolai Lenin was in Russia ready to touch off long-matured plans for a Soviet revolution. When this second revolution came in the fall, it was to take Russia completely out of the war and dim Wilson's rosy picture. To a conciliatory message from Wilson, Lenin was to reply: "First break the power of the capitalists in America, put a score of your financial grandees in prison, and we shall be willing to treat with you as an ally."

Congress declared war on April 6. The moment the die was cast a remarkable metamorphosis came over Woodrow Wilson. The conflict within himself was sublimated in the vision of a divine goal. His religion taught him that the way to salvation lay through travail and suffering. A great exaltation now filled his spirit. The war became a holy crusade and he set about it with the fervor of the seers and prophets of old. Without this sense of kinship with the divine power Wilson never could have reconciled himself to the grim business at hand.



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Seemingly overnight the pacifist turned warrior and erected the greatest war machine the world had ever seen. The spirit of the man at the helm permeated the country. The idea of a war to end war inflamed the people's imagination. America changed its habits and its outlook. At the blow of a bugle, the flourish of Wilson's pen, Americans consented joyously to emergency measures and infringements upon their rights that would have been impossible six months before.

The pacifist Secretary of War, Newton Baker, at once presented to Congress a plan for military conscription. It could raise an army of ten million men, if needed. The draft act was a radical departure from American tradition. It astounded even extreme militarists. Congress unhesitatingly passed the measure. Within three months draft boards in various parts of the country were enrolling millions of young men. Those selected for service were trained in thirty-two great cantonments which went up as though by magic. Each cantonment was a veritable city in itself, providing accommodations for forty thousand men.

Following the draft another blow was dealt American tradition: a censorship was set up over the press and over free speech. Those who opposed the war either kept their opinions to themselves or were jailed. To instill the "necessary indignation" against Germany and for general purposes of propaganda and publicity a bureau was organized under George Creel. America had to be stirred into realization of the profound sacrifices which were to be demanded of her, for her entry into the war was

rather a hip-hip-hooray affair. A shrewd memorandum to his government from Sir William Wiseman, head of the British secret service in America, stresses this:

It is important to realize that the American people do not consider themselves in any danger from the Central Powers. It is true that many of their statesmen foresee the danger of a German triumph, but the majority of the people are still very remote from the war. They believe they are fighting for the cause of Democracy and not to save themselves.

There remains a mistrust of Great Britain, inherited from the days of the War of Independence, and kept alive by the ridiculous history books still used in the national schools. On the other hand, there is the historical sympathy for France, and trouble could far more easily be created between the British and the Americans than with any of our allies. German propaganda naturally follows this line, and has been almost entirely directed against England. . . .

Any pronouncement the 'Allied Governments can make, which will help the President to satisfy the American people that their efforts and sacrifices will reap the disinterested reward they hope for, will be gratifying to him, and in its ultimate result serve to commit America yet more wholeheartedly to the task in hand.

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The Americans need a slogan. The President realized this when he gave them the watchword that America was fighting 'to Make the World Safe for Democracy'.

Our diplomatic task is to get enormous quantities of supplies from the United States, while we have no means of bringing pressure to bear upon them to this end. We have to obtain vast loans, tonnage, supplies and munitions, food, oil, and other raw materials. And the supplies which we demand, while not remarkable in relation to the output of other belligerents, are far beyond the figures understood by the American public today.

The Administration are ready to assist us to the limit of the resources of their country; but it is necessary for them to educate Congress and the nation to appreciate the actual meaning of these gigantic figures. It is not enough for us to assure them that without these supplies the War will be lost. For the public ear we must translate dollars and tonnage into the efforts and achievements of the fleets and the armies. We must impress upon them the fighting value of their money.

Though the German submarines were sinking more than half a million tons of shipping a month, Papa Joffre and Arthur Balfour crossed the perilous Atlantic to bring the war home to America. The Allies no longer

concealed the desperateness of their plight. Although they had checked Germany on the western front, with Italy prone and Russia prostrate, they doubted their ability to hold out much longer. Every fourth ship leaving a British harbor went down. England's food supply was being rapidly cut off. The British civil population went on rations. So did the French.

The food shortage of the Allies could be relieved only by the United States. To meet this vital urgency the Food Administration was created. Wilson insisted that its powers should be vested in a single authority, in order to insure quick, effective action. Intimidated by the sweep of the emergency, Congress consented to the appointment of Herbert Clark Hoover as food dictator. Hoover was an American engineer who had done notable work as director of Belgian Relief. Though Wilson did not like him personally, he recognized Hoover's ability as an organizer. Then came the "Wheatless Mondays" and "Meatless Tuesdays". It was virgin America's first lesson in conservation. She rather enjoyed it. Ironically enough, it was through food, rather than moral preachments, that Wilson now dominated European affairs.

In all his war measures Wilson worked through a group of business men known as the Council of National Defense. The function of the Council was to harmonize industry, labor, agriculture, transportation, exports and finance. Dollar-a-year men flocked to Washington. Some were overpaid, others served selfish interests; but the majority, without regard to politics, were useful and intelligent.



© Wide World Photos.

PRESIDENT WILSON IN A NEW YORK LIBERTY LOAN PARADE



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Once at a Gridiron dinner, when many of the volunteers were present, Wilson satirically remarked: "My troubles with the war are slight compared with the difficulties of satisfying my distinguished dollar-a-year associates. Each thinks he ought to have all attention and is unhappy if any is given to others of his group. The result is that I am like an opera impresario, every member of whose troupe wants to be recognized and applauded as the prima donna."

Only a young country could have expended its money so prodigally as did America, entering its first world combat. Again Wilson broke tradition in financing the war. The larger part of the thirty billions actually spent and loaned before the war ended was raised through bonds directly sold to the people. Financially everyone participated in the war. If one was an American one bought Liberty Bonds—a dollar down and pay each week. No one could escape. At first Wilson hoped that no future generation would have to pay the cost of the tragedy. This became impossible when the expense mounted to more than a billion dollars a month. Though heavy income and war taxes of every description were levied, it became obvious we would do well to pay one-third of the enormous outlay as we went along.

The great magnates of industry and finance were no longer anathema to Wilson. Charles M. Schwab and James A. Farrell, of the large steel corporations, were called upon to put through the greatest shipbuilding program ever conceived.

Everywhere one turned one found representatives of

J. P. Morgan & Company, fiscal agents of the Allies. A partner of the firm, Edward R. Stettinius, became Assistant Secretary of War and was given complete power to purchase war supplies. Henry P. Davison took charge of the Red Cross. Dwight W. Morrow and Thomas W. Lamont were confidential financial advisors.

When America declared war Admiral Sims was en route for England to arrange for the co-operation of the American navy with the British fleet. The new Wilson, a warring crusader, rumbled complaints across the water and impatient demands for action. He cabled Admiral Sims to stir up the British Admiralty, which to him seemed sluggish. "In the presence of the present submarine emergency they are helpless to the point of panic. Every plan we suggest they reject for some reason of prudence. In my view this is not a time for prudence but for boldness even at the cost of great losses. . . . Give me such advice as you would give if you were handling and running a navy of your own."

In a remarkable speech to the officers of the Atlantic fleet, Wilson again appealed to individual initiative:

Nobody ever before conducted a war like this and therefore nobody can pretend to be a professional in it. . . . Now somebody has got to think this war out. Somebody has got to think out the way not only to fight the submarine, but to do something different from what we are doing.

We are hunting hornets all over the farm



and letting the nest alone. None of us know how to go to the nest and crush it; and yet I despair of hunting for hornets all over the sea when I know where the nest is and know that the nest is breeding hornets as fast as I can find them. I am willing for my part, and I know you are willing because I know the stuff you are made of—I am willing to sacrifice half the navy Great Britain and we together have to crush out that nest, because if we crush it the war is won. I have come here to say that I do not care where it comes from, I do not care whether it comes from the youngest officer or the oldest, but I want the officers of this navy to have the distinction of saying how this war is going to be won. . . .

America has always boasted that she could find men to do anything. She is the prize amateur nation of the world. Germany is the prize professional nation of the world. Now when it comes to doing new things and doing them well, I will back the amateur against the professional every time, because the professional does it out of the book and the amateur does it with his eyes open upon a new world with a new set of circumstances. He knows so little about it that he is fool enough to do the right thing.

“In fields other than his own Woodrow Wilson was

the most naïve of men," Newton D. Baker recently told the writer. "Although he hardly knew from which end of a rifle a bullet is fired, and had no practical knowledge of ballistics, he was most enthusiastic over the scientific side of war. Once the President got intensely interested in a weird scheme for an airplane engine to be run by a perpetual motion machine. He gave me no peace until I consented to interview the inventor. Mr. Wilson was disappointed when our experts reported the scheme was preposterous. However, the very naïveté of Wilson often got results. There was something deucedly convincing about his faith."

As Wilson, after his own fashion, got interested in the mechanics of war, he had less and less time for his library. Baker relates how, in one of their many chats, he happened to quote a line of Anatole France. "Ah, Baker, I see you still make literary allusions," remarked Wilson. "I don't any more. I find they so seldom *allude*."

Upon the declaration of war Theodore Roosevelt rushed to the White House with elaborate plans. At one word from the President, the Colonel said, he would raise a division of volunteers, with accompanying brigade of cavalry, and rush to the aid of the Allies. No one loved war more than the Rough Rider and no one was more outraged when the President refused his offer. Roosevelt's opposition and personal animosity toward Wilson, which he had openly displayed for two years, now boiled into a berserk rage.

Whatever Wilson's personal attitude was toward Roosevelt, he had decided to select a professional soldier

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for command in France and to give him complete authority. He chose General John J. Pershing, who the previous year had been in charge of troops on the Mexican border, and backed him to the limit. Pershing was a stern disciplinarian and had no interest in politics.

There was no love between Pershing and General Leonard Wood, Roosevelt's protégé, who had his eye on the White House. Pershing did not want the fiery Wood in France and saw that he was kept from active command. The Roosevelt-Wood camp kicked up a mighty rumpus. Wilson received Wood at the White House but refused to order him overseas. Wilson scorned public discussion of the episode but said privately: "I am not at all interested in any squabble or quarrel between General Pershing and General Wood. The only thing I am interested in is winning this war. I selected Pershing for the task and I intend to back him up in every recommendation he makes."

That too was Wilson's attitude toward Pershing, the latter eloquently testifies, in the historic struggle to keep the American army intact. When Pershing arrived in France, June 14, 1917, he found that the Allied commanders had planned to place units of American troops wherever they were needed. Finally in January, 1918, after a long argument, Pershing moved the A.E.F. into a sector of its own.

Col. House made an astonishing entry in his diary on January 5, 1918:

"Saturday was a remarkable day. I went over to the

State Department just after breakfast to see Polk and the others, and returned to the White House at a quarter-past ten in order to get to work with the President. He was waiting for me. We actually got down to work at half-past ten and finished re-making the map of the world, as we would have it, at half-past twelve o'clock."

House referred to the final drafting of the Fourteen Points.

In them Wilson gave his own formulas for permanent world peace. They were the realization of months of labor by scores of scholars, banded into a research body called The Inquiry. These experts piled up data on every social, economic, racial problem that could bear even remotely upon the establishment of a lasting peace.

Wilson, with House's aid, boiled the enormous mass of material down to 600 words. Incidentally, the President, who believed that thirteen was his lucky number (his only superstition), was disappointed because he could not reduce the Fourteen Points by one. The underlying principle of the Fourteen Points had been set forth by Kerensky, in Russia, and by the German Socialists: "Peace without annexations or indemnities on the basis of the rights of nations to decide their own destiny."

Briefly, there were to be "open covenants of peace, openly arrived at" and no more secret treaties; absolute freedom of the seas; free trade wherever possible; drastic reduction of armament; the right of dependent races to control themselves. Points Six-Thirteen, inclusive, dealt with conditions the Central Powers must meet before there could be any peace parley. Last and most impor-

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tant was the demand for a league of nations that would forever prevent future wars.

When Wilson took his Fourteen Points before Congress on January 8, 1918, he spoke, one observer recalls, "like God Almighty". To the harassed masses of the world he seemed an inspired prophet. He was at the pinnacle of moral leadership. The Allies, their closets jammed with secret treaties, regarded the Points merely as excellent war strategy. Georges Clemenceau remarked with a grin: "Wilson required four more commandments than God himself."

There were skeptics, too, in America. George Harvey, Wilson's erstwhile backer, shot barbed shafts at Wilson in the columns of his new weekly. W. R. Hearst tuned up his superb organization of sensational journalism to remind the people of the evils that lay in entangling alliances. With pen and from the platform Col. Roosevelt leveled a continual barrage against the whole conduct of the war. He said that Wilson, who had drifted "stern foremost" into the war, now wanted to make an "easy peace". The Colonel particularly despised Secretary of War Baker and Secretary of the Navy Daniels, the latter of whom he once contemptuously characterized to me as "a deuce spot and a joker".

Roosevelt's rumblings helped to stir up a movement among Republicans for the creation of a super-cabinet to conduct the war. Roosevelt was to be made Minister of Munitions. Elihu Root, Henry Cabot Lodge and other eminent Republicans were perfectly willing to show the incompetent Democrats how to run a war. Roose-

velt came to Washington, held a levee at the home of his son-in-law, Nicholas Longworth, and was lionized by the anti-Wilson forces. The situation looked serious.

Suddenly Wilson punctured the whole movement. He sent in a bill to Congress asking far greater powers than had been suggested for the proposed super-cabinet. The President, in effect, asked autocratic control over the conduct of the war. This breath-taking request silenced the opposition, and Congress, with a few growls, gave in.

Without much regard to the Constitution, the espionage and anti-free-speech laws were tightened. Often on flimsy pretext men were jailed for "giving aid to the enemy". Periodicals were suppressed. Military courts-martial meted out severe and narrow-minded penalties. A spy hunt raged. Housewives boycotted tradesmen and social acquaintances of German blood and looked for spies under every bed. Eugene V. Debs, beloved leader of the Socialist party, was jailed for opposition to the war. Hundreds of conscientious objectors were locked in Leavenworth and military prison camps. A year before, Woodrow Wilson might have been listed among them! Now America's single war-master turned a cold face, as many other Presidents had done, upon such incidentals. Much water had gone over the dam since 1915 when Wilson's unsuccessful plea to the Governor of Utah for the executed Joe Hill, I. W. W. poet, had in the West caused the sobriquet "I. W. W. Wilson" to be fastened upon the President.

As the war approached its final tremendous climax, keen observers noted a change in the President.

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Wilson, the autocrat, no longer persuaded with apt and winning words. He expounded. He assumed that the masses were behind him and would eagerly support his plans for the reformation of the world. European statesmen were challenged by Wilson to oppose his Fourteen Points. The Allies were so dependent upon the United States that they dared not dispute him on any point.

As summer faded into fall, Wilson was at the zenith of his power. While the Allies and our American dough-boys were catapulting into the German lines, Wilson's dream of a peace of the peoples was reaching triumphantly into the hearts and minds of the German masses. Almost as rapidly, though, as Wilson's stature grew abroad was his prestige being undermined in America.

America never had been internationally minded. Now that casualty lists were pouring in and treasure was pouring out, the country's chief idea was to end the war and return to its old habits. The United States desired no permanent entangling alliances. Wilson's lofty world dream began to frighten people.

The Republicans saw a chance now to cripple Wilson in the congressional elections of 1918. Two weeks before the end of the campaign Wilson appealed to the country to elect a Democratic congress so that he might continue to be the people's "unembarrassed spokesman." That plea proved a major political blunder. The Republicans cried that Wilson had misused his great office to humiliate an honorable opposition. Although Wilson had asked no more than other Presidents with lesser

problems to meet, his partisan appeal turned the tide. A Republican House and Senate were elected. This meant that Wilson's measures, regardless of merit, were to be thwarted at every turn—so bitter was the Republican feeling against him personally.

Meanwhile, in Europe, the Central Powers were at the end of their rope.

Germany's whole structure collapsed as though caught in an avalanche. The Kaiser fled on November 10. The prostrate German people asked for an armistice based upon the Fourteen Points.

The Allies consented with two vital reservations. The British refused definite commitments on the freedom of the seas. The French inserted a clause reserving consideration of claims arising in the future.

A formal armistice was signed on November 11, 1918.

Everywhere people went wild with joy.

Unable to remain indoors, Woodrow Wilson slipped down to the White House gates and, from the shadows, watched the celebrating crowd surging past.

"Well, Tumulty," Wilson told his faithful secretary, "the war's over and I feel like the Confederate soldier whom General John B. Gordon used to tell of, soliloquizing on a long, hard march during the Civil War: 'I love my country and I'm fightin' for my country, but if this war ever ends, I'll be dad-burned if I ever love another country.'"

Woodrow Wilson, more than any single individual, had won the war.

Could he win the peace?



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*Chapter 14*

THE GREAT  
EUROPEAN  
VENTURE

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## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE GREAT EUROPEAN VENTURE

AS WHISTLES SCREAMED AND THOUSANDS CHEERED, THE *George Washington* on December 4, 1918, slipped out of New York Harbor and pointed her bow toward Europe.

Woodrow Wilson was on his way to Paris and the Peace Conference.

His whole being flamed with determination to abolish war for all time. He was confident that his Fourteen Points, conditionally agreed upon at the armistice, would prove the solution.

Now the fighting was over the Allies had little use for Wilson's brand of idealism. They were dreading his influence with the masses. House, Cobb and other close advisers already in Europe had united in warning Wilson that it would be a ghastly blunder to cross the Atlantic. He would be the only ruler at the peace table. They felt he could accomplish more in Washington. Two eminent attorneys in the United States asserted that his office would be vacated if he left the country. Impatiently, the President had brushed these objections aside in the burning belief that only he himself in person could gain permanent peace for the world. It was his duty to go to Paris, he said.

Wilson's choice of his peace commissioners manifested

at once his determination to accept complete individual responsibility. Col. House, Secretary of State Lansing, General Tasker Bliss and Henry White were named. It was a colorless commission, the names carrying little weight with the American people.

Henry White, a charming old gentleman, approaching the anecdotal stage of life, was the only Republican. Wilson was at once accused of narrow-minded partisanship in not selecting one or more outstanding Republicans such as Elihu Root, Charles Evans Hughes or former President Taft. Root and Taft were both in general sympathy with Wilson's peace ideas through their association with the League to Enforce Peace. In view of Republican control of the forthcoming Congress, political expediency, at least, would seemingly have led Wilson to welcome some division of responsibility. But Woodrow Wilson was not built that way.

As he walked the deck of the *George Washington* with Mrs. Wilson at his side, Wilson, buoyant and vibrant, seemed keyed for action. He, who had hailed America as the greatest nation of amateurs on earth, now found himself completely surrounded by experts.

The men of The Inquiry had embarked in a body. Shepherded by Col. House's brother-in-law, Dr. Sidney E. Mezes, president of the College of the City of New York, they had come on board with tons and tons of documents. Indeed, from every port-hole, as the *George Washington* steamed down the bay, peeped an expert. Horn-rim glasses and beards predominated. There were specialists on economics, international law, ethnography,

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history, geography, map-making, steel, chemistry, tariffs, patents, machinery, oil, engineering, agriculture. Wilson had available at his finger tips information on every conceivable subject. There was a specialist on even the tiniest and most remote of countries. No other member of the Peace Conference was to be so well equipped with facts as Wilson. House and Mezes, gathering this brilliant body of men, had been working like beavers for more than a year.

Wilson was perfectly at home with these men of the colleges. He chatted gayly with them singly and addressed them often in groups. "Show me the truth and I will fight for it!" he cried one night when all were assembled in the salon. "You are my advisers. When I ask for information I will have no way of checking it up and must act upon it unquestioningly. We will be deluged with claims plausibly and convincingly presented. It will be your task to establish the truth or falsity of these claims out of your specialized knowledges, so that my positions may be taken fairly and intelligently."

The peace quest of Woodrow Wilson had a long and picturesque background.

More than a hundred years before, in August, 1815, the first peace society in the world had been founded in New York. The moving spirit of the New York Peace Society was David Low Dodge, great-grandfather of Wilson's college classmate, Cleveland H. Dodge. David Dodge, a merchant, was a strict Presbyterian and prided

himself upon having read the Bible "critically from beginning to end forty-two times".

About the same time another apostle of peace, Noah Worcester, a Massachusetts minister and shoemaker, wrote a pamphlet entitled *A Solemn Review of the Custom of War, Showing that War Is the Effect of Popular Delusion, and Proposing a Remedy*. The preacher-cobbler's remedy closely resembled the League of Nations, which was Wilson's fourteenth point. Worcester wrote: "If the eyes of the people could be opened in regard to the evils and delusions of war, would it not be easy to form a confederacy of nations and organize a high court of equity to decide national controversies?"

Later in 1849 Elihu Burritt, a blacksmith, who taught himself more than fifty languages, ancient and modern, represented American peace-lovers at an international congress in Paris over which Victor Hugo presided. Hugo visioned "those two immense groups, the United States of America and the United States of Europe, extending the hand of fellowship across the ocean." Burritt eloquently discussed the idea of a Congress and High Court of Nations. This was commonly called the American Plan.

A few days before Wilson sailed, his implacable foe-man, Theodore Roosevelt, through the press, had bluntly asserted that Wilson no longer represented the United States:

Our allies and our enemies and Mr. Wilson  
himself should all understand that Mr. Wilson

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has no authority whatever to speak for the American people at this time. His leadership has just been emphatically repudiated by them. The newly elected Congress comes far nearer than Mr. Wilson to having the right to speak the purposes of the American people at this moment. Mr. Wilson and his Fourteen Points and his four supplementary points and his five complimentary points and all his utterances every which way have ceased to have any shadow of right to be accepted as expressive of the will of the American people.

He is President of the United States. He is a part of the treaty-making power; but he is only part. If he acts in good faith to the American people, he will not claim on the other side of the water any representative capacity in himself to speak for the American people. He will say frankly that his personal leadership has been repudiated and that he now has merely the divided official leadership which he shares with the Senate. . . .

America played in the closing months of the war a gallant part, but not in any way the leading part, and she played this part only by acting in strictest agreement with our allies and under the joint high command. She should take precisely the same attitude at the Peace Conference. We have lost in this war about 236,000 men killed and wounded. England and

France have lost about 7,000,000. Italy and Belgium and the other allies have doubtless lost 3,000,000 more. Of the terrible sacrifice which has enabled the allies to win the victory, America has contributed just about two per cent.

It is our business to act with our allies and to show an undivided front with them against any move of our late enemies. I am no Utopian. I understand entirely that there can be shifting alliances. But in the present war we have won only by standing shoulder to shoulder with our allies and presenting an undivided front to the enemy. It is our business to show the same loyalty and good faith at the Peace Conference. Let it be clearly understood that the American people absolutely stand behind France, England, Italy, Belgium and the other allies at the Peace Conference, just as she has stood with them during the last eighteen months of the war. Let every difference of opinion be settled among the allies themselves, and then let them impose their common will on the nations responsible for the hideous disaster which has almost wrecked mankind.

This statement was reverberating in every capital of Europe. Wilson had ignored Roosevelt for so long that he paid scant attention to him now. He was, however,



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aware of the situation he was facing in Paris. One evening, as the voyage approached its end, Wilson was walking the deck with George Creel, chairman of the Committee on Public Information.

"It is to America," remarked the President, "that the whole world turns today, not only with its wrongs but with its hopes and grievances. The hungry expect us to feed them, the roofless look to us for shelter, the sick of heart and body look to us for cure. All of these expectations have in them the quality of terrible urgency. There must be no delay. It has been so always. People will endure their tyrants for years, but they tear their deliverers to pieces if a millennium is not created immediately. Yet you know, and I know, that these ancient wrongs, these present unhappinesses, are not to be remedied in a day or with a wave of the hand. What I seem to see—with all my heart I hope that I am wrong—is a tragedy of disappointment."

There was, however, no note of tragedy in the President's reception in France. Indeed, seldom has mortal man received such an ovation. The masses hailed him as a second Messiah, hope and champion of the downtrodden. Candles burned before his picture in multitudes of homes and people prayed for him. Streets and plazas, and even babies, were named after him. Beneath the homage of the shouting crowds was an undercurrent of reverence and awe. "*Vive l'Amérique!*" was on every tongue. Through a path strewn with flowers and solidly banked with cheering people, President Poincaré drove the Wilsons to the palace which the French government

had set aside for their use. Edith Bolling Wilson, too, shared the honors of the royal entry into Paris. She was dressed from head to foot in purple of a dark plum shade. It was her favorite color and set off magnificently her flashing brunette beauty. Her lips parted with excitement, revealing perfect white teeth, her smile displayed to full advantage the dimples in her cheeks. No queen could have played her rôle better than the First Lady of America.

If the Peace Conference could have met that day Wilson doubtless would have swept everything before him.

The Allies, however, had no intention of permitting Wilson to dictate an easy peace. They were out to divide the spoils. Delay was their weapon. Wilson must receive the homage of England, Belgium, Italy. So in Christmas week the Wilsons crossed the channel to England, where a few days before Lloyd George had won a general election on a platform of "Hang the Kaiser" and "Make Germany pay the *whole cost of the war*." Despite this repudiation of Wilson's idealism the President's reception in England matched that of France in enthusiasm.

King George personally went to the station to meet Wilson and take him to Buckingham Palace as his guest. As the royal automobile, with the King and Queen and the Wilsons, began to move away from the station Wilson, suddenly looking about him, placed his hand on the King's knee and in a tone of alarm exclaimed: "Just a moment! Where are the officers?" The King pointed to

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the guard of honor, standing stiffly at salute, and replied: "There they are, those in front of the ranks, those with swords." "No—no!" interjected Wilson impatiently, "I mean the detectives that should be on the running board of this automobile." The King smilingly replied: "Oh, that is not customary in this country. I can assure you and Mrs. Wilson that you are quite safe here with the Queen and myself."

In the midst of Wilson's British triumphs, Premier Clemenceau shouted in the Chamber of Deputies that France stood for the old alliances and the old balance of power. The deputies overwhelmingly approved the Tiger's defiance of Wilson's proposed League of Nations. When he returned to Paris Wilson, unruffled, refused to discuss the matter.

Still the Peace Conference was delayed. Wilson next went to Italy. That journey from Turin to Rome and return marked the climax of the emotional ovations given him by the people. Starvation stalked at Italy's very threshold. Revolution was feared daily. Wilson had met King Victor Emanuel shortly after his arrival in Paris. "Good Lord!" moaned the King as he beheld Wilson's luxurious Paris quarters, "we can't give you anything like this at the Quirinal."

In Rome, only the King and the people were seemingly in favor of Wilson's cause. The reactionary cabinet, like that of England and France, wanted to grab the spoils of war. They were frantic for fear that Wilson might ruin their plans by direct appeal to the people. They subtly prevented it. Wilson accepted an invitation

to address a great mass meeting in the Piazza Venezia at two-thirty o'clock one afternoon. While more than fifty thousand people waited for hours in the great square the government officers craftily thrust interview after interview upon him. It was not until six o'clock that a blast of trumpets announced the approach of the President. The crowd, forgetting its weariness, cheered wildly. The cheers changed to a mighty moan when the procession swept by at full speed. Wilson was as surprised as they at the failure to halt. He resented the deception bitterly, nor was his indignation lessened when his brief explanation to the people was suppressed by the Italian censors.

Milan, too, outdid herself in fervor for the President. The crowded Opera House went wild on a Sunday evening when the President and Mrs. Wilson took their places in a box. In response to the ovation Wilson rose again and again and blew kisses to the audience. He did not seem a Presbyterian elder on that Sabbath night.

Back in Paris on January 7, Wilson was angered that still no date had been set for the Peace Conference. Peremptorily he refused to visit Belgium or the devastated areas of France. There would be no further touring whatsoever. "Ah, my friend President Wilson is a man of *noble candeur*," murmured Clemenceau—the idiomatic French phrase meaning "stupid simplicity"—and called a meeting of the Supreme Council.

'And so at last, on January 15, the conference got under way.

History has seldom thrown into the foreground a

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more fascinating group of men than those gathered at the peace table. Never was a body composed of individuals more divergent in temperament, ideals, even physical characteristics. Barring Wilson they had but one aim in common: to obtain for their countries every single bit of advantage possible.

Georges Clemenceau, from the beginning, was the dominating European. The old Tiger, gnarled, squat, his gloved hands reaching ape-like below his knees, was the very embodiment of France. Clemenceau was a pagan and a patriot to the last drop of his rich, red blood. In his youth he had seen the Germans march into Paris. He had fought at the side of the great Gambetta. He lived, as did millions of other Frenchmen, in the one consuming hope of wiping out the writhing humiliation of 1871 and the years that followed. In the dark spring of 1918, when the German guns were thundering almost at the gates of Paris, he had cried: "War, war, war to the last man!" His unquenchable spirit had united his country. Now he alone of those who gathered to dictate peace had a united country back of him. There was something heroic in his bellowing demand that France must be given security. He was all of a color, the old Tiger, and therefore easy to understand. Wily, witty, cynical, with no illusions, swayed only by facts, a pastmaster of statecraft—the powerful, stocky form of Georges Clemenceau blocked the path that led to Wilson's dream.

Lloyd George, the British premier, on the other hand, was complex and as shifting as quicksilver. The mer-

curial Welshman was brilliant but unsound, clever as six foxes and running Ananias to a dead heat in the Veracity Stakes. He relied solely upon his boundless ingenuity and dexterity to cope with crises as they cropped up, which they daily did owing to his lack of policy. An old hand at the delicate art of straddling, Lloyd George sought to steer a middle course between Clemenceau and Wilson. It turned out to be a zigzag progress. But the rosy-cheeked little Welshman always bobbed up gay and smiling.

Premier Orlando, a plump and friendly little man, represented Italy in the Supreme Council. He, however, was but a pawn for the Machiavellian Baron Sidney Sonnino, Italian minister of foreign affairs. Stoop-shouldered, hawk-faced, the aged Sonnino, son of an Italian Jew and an English mother, was a confirmed imperialist and an inflexible enemy of "Utopian theories" and "emotional experiments".

In this highly charged atmosphere Wilson sought to enforce his Fourteen Points. "Open covenants openly arrived at" went first into the scrap heap. In the inflamed state of conflicting ambitions the Allies dared not openly debate the score or more of secret treaties and understandings that bound them. Next Great Britain, which had postponed the discussion of the freedom of the seas issue in the armistice agreement, now flatly refused to yield the point. One by one the Fourteen Points were whittled away or left for future discussion. "How did you get along with Lloyd George and the President?" Col. House one day asked Clemenceau. "Splend-



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#### THE BIG FOUR

*Left to right: David Lloyd George, Vittorio Orlando, Georges Clemenceau, Woodrow Wilson.*





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didly," grunted the Tiger. "We disagreed about everything."

Wilson's first victory came when he prevented the parceling out of the German colonies. After a bitter struggle he wrested from the land-hungry Allies a pledge to make the German colonies mandatories under a League of Nations. Liberal opinion in England forced Lloyd George to cast the decisive vote supporting Wilson. The League became Wilson's one hope. He was made chairman of a special committee to draft a League constitution.

The American President found strongest support for the League in England, where the idea had been agitated for years. Two British pioneers, Lord Robert Cecil and General Jan Smuts, worked constantly with Wilson. Léon Bourgeois, of France, and Premier Orlando, of Italy, were other members of the League committee.

The final draft was ready early in February. Its outline was simple, aiming at disarmament, arbitration and general co-operation of nations through a League council and assembly. Wilson demanded that the League should be made a part of the treaty. The Peace Conference had gained little headway. Reluctantly, even Clemenceau realized that some such organization as the League might prove useful, and agreed to Wilson's proposal.

At an open meeting of the Peace Conference on February 14, 1919, the day before he sailed back to the United States, Wilson read the Covenant of the League of Nations.

"It was a typical Wilsonian performance," writes William Allen White, an eye-witness. "A great thing done insignificantly. All the notables crowded about him stiffly, shaking manikin hands with him, apparently congratulating him. But Mrs. Wilson, who had exchanged smiles with him as he spoke, smiled proudly when he finished, and her smiles were the only human thing of the occasion; the only indication in the hour that this man had done a big thing, who, by sheer force of will, from unwilling governments had wrested a radical covenant of democracy. From the whole tone which he set for the day, a stranger, not understanding his words, might have thought he was bidding on a list of live stock at a country fair. . . . When it was over, without tears or cheers and without applause, the President slipped through the crowd in the room, joined Mrs. Wilson in a corridor, and they two hurried in their carriages to the railway station and sped away for Brest."

Wilson was making a hurried trip to Washington to sign a number of important bills.

Upon his arrival the President found everywhere in America tremendous opposition to the League. The Irish accused him of being the tool of the British in not fighting for Irish independence. "America First" advocates protested that the League would rob the United States of its sovereignty. The Republican party had organized a powerful backfire against Wilson and the whole League idea. Taft and other friendly Republicans suggested amendments safeguarding the Monroe Doc-

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trine and guaranteeing America's right to withdraw from the League at any time.

Invited to the White House to discuss the covenant, the majority of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs were coldly hostile. Some of the conferees—Lodge of Massachusetts in particular—were scarcely polite. Three senators—Sherman of Illinois, Lodge, and Johnson of California—showed their temper by filibustering to death the great appropriation bills.

Wilson's fortnight in the United States was stormy. His power in America was rapidly waning. If aware of it, he did not show it. In vigorous invective he told the Democratic National Committee members what he thought of his opponents: "Of all the blind and little, provincial people they are the littlest and most contemptible. It is not their character so much that I have a contempt for, though that contempt is thoroughgoing, but their minds. They have not got even good working imitations of minds. They remind me of a man with a head that is not a head but is just a knot providentially put there to keep him from raveling out, but why the Lord should not have been willing to let them ravel out I do not know."

On March 4, the day before the *George Washington* was to bear Wilson back to France, Henry Cabot Lodge presented a resolution in the Senate opposing the League of Nations "in the form now proposed" and urging the completion of the peace treaty before the League should even be considered. This Round Robin resolution, as it came to be called, contained the signatures of thirty-

seven Senators, more than the one-third required to defeat a treaty.

In spite of all the odds daily lengthening against him, Wilson's spirit did not flag. Before sailing he announced grimly that he would not return until "all was over, over there."

Indeed all seemed over, over there—for Wilson. In the President's absence the imperialists had a field day. Wilson's viceroy, Col. House, unable to stem the tide, wrote mournfully in his diary March 3, 1919:

It is now evident that the peace will not be such a peace as I had hoped. . . . If the President should exert his influence among the liberals and laboring classes, he might possibly overthrow the governments in Great Britain, France and Italy; but if he did he would still have to reckon with our own people and he might bring the whole world into chaos. The overthrow of governments might not end there, and it would be a grave responsibility for any man to take at this time. . . . I dislike to sit and have forced upon us such a peace as we are facing. We will get something out of it in the way of a League of Nations, but even that is an imperfect instrument.

When Wilson returned to Paris he found that the Treaty and the League of Nations had been separated. Clemenceau and his Allies were more rapacious than

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ever in their demands for territory and vast indemnities. The European imperialists, quick to take advantage of the changing tone in America, were quite willing to scrap the League entirely. With every ounce of energy in his brain and body Wilson set out to salvage his League of Nations.

The dramatic struggle began on March 18. A deadlock ensued between Clemenceau and Wilson. Lloyd George bobbed between them like a cork. On March 26 Clemenceau agreed to a League if France were permitted to extend her borders to the Rhine. Each morning the *Tiger* related that he gave himself a Coué treatment: "Georges Clemenceau, you *do* believe in a League of Nations, you *DO* believe in a League of Nations."

Wilson absolutely refused the French demand for the Rhine frontier, saying that it would create another Alsace-Lorraine. Bombarded by fresh demands of the Allied nations, great and small, Wilson felt himself harassed beyond endurance. He cabled the Navy Department asking how soon the *George Washington* could be sent to Brest. If he had left for home, as this message presaged, the Allies might have been brought quickly to book—or revolution might have broken out in Europe.

Instead, on April 3, Wilson fell seriously ill. In the supercharged atmosphere of Paris there were wild rumors that influenza germs had been fed to the President in ice. Dr. Cary Grayson wrote to Secretary Tamm: "The President was taken violently sick last Thursday. The attack was very sudden. At three o'clock he was apparently all right; at six he was seized with vio-

lent paroxysms of coughing, which were so severe and frequent that it interfered with his breathing. He had a fever of 103° and a profuse diarrhea. I was at first suspicious that his food had been tampered with, but it turned out to be the beginning of an attack of influenza. That night was one of the worst through which I have ever passed. I was able to control the spasms of coughing, but his condition looked very serious. Since that time he has been gradually improving."

Though Wilson resumed his activities within a week, his health was never again the same. Ray Stannard Baker, Wilson's official biographer, writes:

No one who really saw the President in action in Paris, saw what he did in those grilling months of struggle, fired at in front, sniped at from behind—and no one who saw what he had to do after he came home from Europe in meeting the great new problems which grew out of the war—will for a moment belittle the immensity of his task, or underrate his extraordinary endurance, energy and courage.

More than once, there in Paris, going up in the evening to see the President, I found him utterly worn out, exhausted, often one side of his face twitching with nervousness. No soldier ever went into battle with more enthusiasm, more aspiration, more devotion to a sacred cause than the President had when he came to Paris; but day after day in those

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months we saw him growing grayer and grayer, grimmer and grimmer, with the fighting lines deepening in his face.

During Wilson's illness, as during his absence, the Allies quickly reverted to their selfish aims. Another deadlock ensued. Wilson was faced with the necessity of withdrawal or compromise. Writhing and reluctant, he consented to measure after measure imposing upon Germany the most drastic peace treaty of modern times—he yielded in order to save the League of Nations, which he trusted would remedy all. "Do you wish me to go home?" Wilson icily asked Clemenceau, at one stage of the deadlock. "No," rasped the Tiger, "I am going home," and the furious old Frenchman stamped out of the room.

Clemenceau finally gave up his demand for the Rhine frontier. Compromise after compromise was made. The League of Nations for the world became part of the treaty.

On May 7, 1919, at Versailles, in the very hall in which the German Empire had been proclaimed in 1871, the terms of the peace were formally announced to Germany. Premier Clemenceau told the German delegation: "The time has come when we must settle our accounts. You have asked for peace. We are ready to give you peace. Everything will be done with the courtesy that is the privilege of civilized nations. It is the second Treaty of Versailles. You may be sure we intend the treaty's guarantees to be sufficient."

Herr Brockdorff-Rantzau, chairman of the German delegation, replied: "We know that the power of the German army is broken. We know the power of the hatred which we encounter here. I do not wish to answer reproach with reproach; but if wrongs were committed in the heat of battle, who is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands since the armistice?"

The terms of the treaty were such as from time immemorial conquerors have imposed upon conquered. The occasion bristled with hostility. In the harsh terms there was little evidence—save the League of Nations—of the man who had crossed the ocean with his Fourteen Points.

After weeks of argument and a few minor amendments, Germany signed the treaty on June 28, 1919. "When the Germans had signed," records Col. House, "and the great Allied Powers had done so, the cannons began to boom. I had a feeling of sympathy for the Germans who sat there quite stoically. It was not unlike what was done in olden times, when the conqueror dragged the conquered at his chariot wheels. To my mind, it is out of keeping with the new era which we profess an ardent desire to promote. I wish it could have been more simple and that there might have been an element of chivalry, which was wholly lacking. The affair was elaborately staged and made as humiliating to the enemy as it well could be."

Wilson issued a formal statement that the work of the conference was finished, adding: "But in a larger sense, its work begins today. In answer to an unmis-



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takable appeal, a League of Nations has been constituted and a Covenant has been drawn which shows the way to international understanding and to peace. We stand at the crossroads, however, and the way is only pointed out. Those who saw through the travail of war the vision of a world made secure for mankind must consecrate their lives to its realization."

Weary and irritable, Wilson turned his face homeward. The fierce and heartbreaking struggle had aged him and undermined his health. It had weakened, too, his friendship with House. The seven years of Damon and Phythias comradeship was at an end. Probably neither realized this as they met for a brief chat the day after the treaty was signed. Never again were they to meet, these men who had dreamed such magnificent dreams together. There was no open break. Wilson simply permitted the friendship gradually to evaporate. A hundred fanciful stories have found their way into print explaining the rift: resentment by Wilson of House's influence with European statesmen; the jealousy of Edith Bolling Wilson; Wilson's belief that House, hypnotized by Clemenceau, consented, during Wilson's absence in America, to the separation of League and Treaty.

House to this day professes to be completely mystified. The writer's own impression is that the cause of the "break" lay in the state of Wilson's health. Depleted nervously, Wilson no longer had the energy to listen to advice.

Woodrow Wilson, who had gone to Europe a god, returned common clay.

Public opinion in America was daily hardening against him.

He was beset by one idea—the United States *must* join the League of Nations.

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*Chapter 15*

THE COLLAPSE  
OF WOODROW  
WILSON

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## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE COLLAPSE OF WOODROW WILSON

WOODROW WILSON RETURNED FROM PARIS TO A PEOPLE that did not share his ardor for the Treaty or his League of Nations.

Most Americans were thoroughly disgusted with the sordid atmosphere of the Peace Conference. Their deep-seated suspicion of Europe, temporarily submerged in the hysteria of war, returned twofold. They wanted no entangling alliances that might lead to more war. Toward Wilson himself they had grown cold and skeptical.

Living in his own microcosm, completely entranced by his vision, Wilson seemingly did not sense the change. If Congress proved obdurate he was still sublimely confident that his cause would win once he took it directly to the people.

Americans had more immediate problems on their minds than the League of Nations. The high cost of living and the war taxes were grinding the middle class. White-collar men were caught between capital and labor, both of which had prospered during the war and both of which were reaching greedily for more advantages. The I. W. W. was seeking to form one big union. Strikes were either under way or threatening everywhere.

Bombs had been mailed to men of wealth and prominence, one exploding on the doorstep of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer. Nation-wide prohibition, first put over as a war measure to conserve food, was soon to go into effect by constitutional amendment. Already prohibitionists were agitating for a drastic enforcement measure.

These domestic problems Wilson postponed in his eagerness to put through the Treaty and the League. Before leaving Paris he had called Congress into extra session. On July 10, 1919, Wilson laid the work of the peace conference before the Senate and asked for prompt ratification. He offered to appear at any time before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, dominated by the Republicans. Their leading spokesmen were Lodge, Borah, Knox and Johnson, all bitterly anti-Wilson. In fact, of the fifteen members of the committee, there were but two or three ungrudging Administration supporters.

Most unyielding of Wilson's opponents was Henry Cabot Lodge. Deep personal animosity governed the relations of the two. In the 1916 campaign Lodge had questioned Wilson's veracity. From the beginning of the European war he had fought every Wilson move. He had sneered at Wilson's pacifism, terming it "womanish". Although Lodge had come out for a League of Nations as early as 1915, it was inevitable that he would seek to hamstring any League bearing Wilson's endorsement. Johnson, Borah and Knox, as well as the fiery Democrat, "Jim" Reed of Missouri, marched with Lodge.

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Borah declared that if the Republican party accepted Wilson's League he would bolt and lead a third party in 1920.

Late in July Wilson again became ill. He had never completely recovered from the attack of influenza. One side of his face still twitched and he was bothered with neuritis. Electric baths and massages brought little relief, nor did week-end cruises on the presidential yacht, the *Mayflower*. His vitality could not renew itself while his mind was obsessed with the urgency for legislative action.

On August 19 the President invited members of the foreign relations committee to the White House for an open discussion of Treaty and League. Only Borah refused the invitation. Wilson frankly admitted that the Treaty was a compromise and that several of its sections pleased him no more than they did the critics. The League he defended and explained in great detail.

The Senators, openly hostile, attacked particularly Article 10, which pledged members of the League to "respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League". They were concerned also over the six British votes against America's one in the proposed League Assembly. Wilson went over point after point, patiently and brilliantly, but made little or no impression. The Ten Commandments, endorsed by Wilson, would not have been accepted by some men on that committee.

Often, in such situations, Wilson had bent Congress to

his will by appealing to the people. He determined to try this "forcing" method again.

Against the advice of Dr. Grayson and the entreaties of Mrs. Wilson, the President planned a tour of the West. Warned that the journey might result in physical and nervous collapse, Wilson said wearily: "I know that I am at the end of my tether, but the trip is necessary to save the Treaty. I am willing to make whatever personal sacrifice is required. If the treaty should be defeated, God only knows what would happen to the world. In the presence of the great tragedy now facing the world, no decent man can count his own personal fortunes in the reckoning. I would gladly give up my life to save the Treaty."

Wilson refused even to consider a week's rest at the Grand Canyon, which Dr. Grayson had sought to insert in the itinerary. "This is a business trip, pure and simple," he insisted. "The people would never forgive me if I turned it into a vacation."

The journey, to Wilson, was a sacred mission. Like the early Christian martyrs he actually seemed to glory in suffering for his principles. After weeks of racking headaches and sleepless nights the President, accompanied by Mrs. Wilson, Grayson and Secretary Tumulty, set out for the West in a special train on the night of September 1. He planned to deliver over a hundred speeches.

The first audience at Columbus, Ohio, was far from enthusiastic. But, as the President journeyed farther west, the people warmed more and more to his emotional



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appeals. In Oregon, Washington and California there were frequent demonstrations.

In the wake of this western tour followed three of Wilson's most vitriolic Republican opponents, Senators Johnson, McCormick and Borah. They addressed turbulent audiences. In Chicago a huge gathering hissed Wilson's name and shouted: "Impeach him! Impeach him!" The Germans and the Irish led in the chorus of hatred. German-Americans blamed Wilson for the harsh treaty terms. Irish-Americans denounced Wilson for his alleged surrender in Paris to Great Britain.

While Wilson nightly preached peace, events in Europe and nearer home were contradicting him. On September 12 the Italian poet, D'Annunzio, seized Fiume. Ireland was in open rebellion against England. Rumania sent a looting expedition into Hungary. Greece grabbed parts of Turkey. Mexico was again stirring with unrest.

In the United States, threatened strikes on the railroads and in the coal and steel industries loomed more menacingly. The times did not appear to have justified the "war to end war". Indeed, they undermined confidence in the League of Nations. Everywhere men jibed: "Where is Wilson's millennium?"

The ailing President was climbing a steep, stony hill. His speeches grew more and more emotional. In the fervor of the crusade he became feverish, his headaches were worse. He slept fitfully and ate little. Daily he grew more gaunt and grim. Those about him watched anxiously. Many a night they thought he would col-

lapse before reaching the platform. Once facing an audience, however, Wilson seemed imbued with new energy, as if recharged. Mrs. Wilson, to whom the trip was "one long nightmare", daily begged him to abandon it. He staunchly refused and even planned a second tour into Senator Lodge's bailiwick of Massachusetts.

On September 25, at Pueblo, Colorado, Wilson remarked that he had such a splitting headache that he would have to shorten his speech. Instead he spoke longer than usual. Many eyes were wet as he described a visit he had made the preceding Memorial Day to the American cemetery of Suresnes, near Paris.

"What of our pledges to the men that lie dead in France?" he exclaimed. "We said that they went over there not to prove the prowess of America or her readiness for another war but to see to it that there never was such a war again. It always seems to make it difficult for me to say anything, my fellow citizens, when I think of my clients in this case. My clients are the children. My clients are the next generation. They do not know what promises and bonds I undertook when I ordered the armies of the United States to the soil of France, but I know, and I intend to redeem my pledges to the children. They shall not be sent upon a similar errand."

Wilson's face was ashen as he left the platform.

That night Dr. Grayson ordered the train to halt while he walked Wilson rapidly up and down the tracks to restore his circulation. After the brief delay the presidential special started again for the next stop, Wichita,

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Kansas. Secretary Tumulty, in his book "Woodrow Wilson As I Know Him", gives a graphic account of what happened next:

About four o'clock in the morning of September 26, 1919, Dr. Grayson knocked at the door of my sleeping compartment and told me to dress quickly, that the President was seriously ill. As we walked toward the President's car, the Doctor told me in a few words of the President's trouble and said that he greatly feared it might end fatally if we should attempt to continue the trip and that it was his duty to inform the President that by all means the trip must be cancelled; but that he did not feel free to suggest it to the President without having my co-operation and support.

When we arrived at the President's drawing room I found him fully dressed and seated in his chair. With great difficulty he was able to articulate. His face was pale and wan. One side of it had fallen and his condition was indeed pitiable to behold. Quickly I reached the same conclusion as that of Dr. Grayson, as to the necessity for the immediate cancellation of the trip, for to continue it, in my opinion, meant death to the President. Looking at me, with great tears running down his face, he said: "My dear boy, this has never happened to me before. I felt it coming on yester-

day. I do not know what to do." He then pleaded with us not to cut short the trip. Turning to both of us, he said: "Don't you see that if you cancel this trip Senator Lodge and his friends will say that I am a quitter and that the western trip was a failure, and the treaty will be lost." Reaching over to him I took both of his hands and said: "What difference, my dear Governor, does it make what they say? Nobody in the world believes you are a quitter, but it is your life that we must now consider. We must cancel the trip and I am sure that when the people learn of your condition there will be no misunderstanding."

He then tried to move over nearer to me to continue his argument against the cancellation of the trip; but he found he was unable to do so. His left leg and arm refused to function. I then realized that the President's whole left side was paralyzed. Looking at me he said: "I want to show them that I can still fight and that I am not afraid. Just postpone the trip for twenty-four hours and I will be all right."

The trip was immediately cancelled. With drawn blinds the train hastened to Washington. Back in the White House Wilson rallied for a few days. Then, at four o'clock on the morning of October 4, Mrs. Wilson was awakened by a cry for help from the President's

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bathroom. She found her husband lying upon the floor, his left leg helplessly pinned beneath him.

Grayson was summoned at once. Specialists were called into consultation. The doctors agreed that Wilson's stroke was due to a cerebral thrombosis, in common parlance a blood clot in the brain. Occurring as it did in Wilson's case in the right side of the brain, it paralyzed the left side of his body.

"Mr. Wilson," said one of the specialists, Dr. Francis X. Dercum, of Philadelphia, "may live five minutes, five months or five years."

The exact nature of the President's illness was not made known for weeks. His condition was concealed even from his cabinet. No one was permitted in the sick room except Mrs. Wilson, the President's daughters, Grayson and occasionally Tumulty. The guardians of the stricken President shielded him closely, fearing that if his condition became known he might lose both his office and his great fight.

Perhaps never in history, in so high a position, has a woman faced the tasks that Edith Bolling Wilson now met. But for her the President could not have carried on. Daily she went over important papers, weighty with matters of state, digesting them, so that at moments when the President was in least pain she could present them to him in résumé and obtain his decision. It was a terrific responsibility—gifted as was Mrs. Wilson with an extraordinary memory and talent for the practical. She rose magnificently to the occasion. Her poise never deserted her. When certain officials insisted that they

must see the President at once on matters that would not brook delay, she refused them admittance, saying quietly: "I am not interested in the President of the United States. I am interested in my husband and his health."

Washington was rife with rumors. The very secrecy of the White House led people to believe the worst. Wilson was reported a victim of every conceivable affliction. Bars, which had been placed years before on the lower-floor windows of the White House as a protection against the baseball-playing Roosevelt youngsters, now took on a sinister aspect. It was whispered that these bars confined a mad President.

While Wilson lay stricken, the affairs of the nation went on as best they could. A thunderous battle was being waged at the Capitol over the Treaty and the League. The tide had definitely turned against Wilson. On November 6 Senator Lodge introduced fourteen reservations, thirteen of which were passed by the Senate. One reservation withdrew the support of the United States in maintaining boundaries fixed in the Treaty. Another repudiated the Shantung award to Japan. A third insisted upon unrestricted armaments for the United States. From his sickbed Wilson protested as vigorously as he was able.

On November 19, before Congress adjourned for a few days, Senator Knox introduced a joint resolution proposing a separate peace with Germany.

With the Treaty facing defeat, Col. House, ignoring the coolness between himself and Wilson, sought again

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to give advice. On November 24, he wrote a letter which may or may not have reached the President:

Dear Governor:

I hesitate to intrude my views upon you at such a time, but I feel that I would be doing less than my duty if I did not do so, since so much depends upon your decision in regard to the treaty. Its failure would be a disaster not less to civilization than to you.

My suggestion is this: Do not mention the treaty in your message to Congress, but return it to the Senate as soon as it convenes. In the meantime send for Senator Hitchcock and tell him that you feel that you have done your duty and have fulfilled your every obligation to your colleagues in Paris by rejecting all offers to alter the document which was formulated there, and you now turn the treaty over to the Senate for such action as it may deem wise to take.

I would advise him to ask the Democratic Senators to vote for the treaty with such reservations as the majority may formulate, and let the matter then rest with the other signatories of the treaty. I would say to Senator Hitchcock that if the allied and associated powers are willing to accept the reservations which the Senate see fit to make, you will

abide by the result, being conscious of having done your full duty.

The allies may not take the treaty with the Lodge reservations as they now stand, and this will be your vindication. But even if they should take them with slight modifications, your conscience will be clear.

After agreement is reached, it can easily be shown that the Covenant in its practical workings in the future will not be seriously hampered and that time will give us a workable machine.

A great many people, Democrats, Progressives and Republicans, have talked with me about ratification of the treaty, and they are all pretty much of one mind regarding the necessity for its passage with or without reservations. To the ordinary man, the distance between the treaty and the reservations is slight.

Of course, the arguments are all with the position you have taken and against that of the Senate, but, unfortunately, no amount of logic can alter the situation; therefore my advice would be to make no further argument, but return the treaty to the Senate without comment and let Senator Hitchcock know that you expect it to be ratified in some form, and then let the other signatories decide for themselves whether they will accept it.

The supreme place which history will give



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you will be largely because you personify in yourself the great idealistic conception of a league of nations. If this conception fails, it will be your failure. Today there are millions of helpless people throughout the world who look to you and you only to make this conception a realization.

Affectionately yours,  
E. M. HOUSE

If Wilson received the letter, there was no response, nor did he have the slightest intention of compromising. He was convinced that his enemies were determined to destroy him by fair means or foul. His feelings were intensified when the Senate, under a thinly veiled subterfuge, sent a committee into his sick room to ascertain whether he was mentally capable of carrying on his duties. Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock, of Nebraska, Wilson's spokesman, reluctantly accepted the mission. The other member of the committee, Senator Albert B. Fall, Republican, of New Mexico, was one of Wilson's severest critics.

The President, propped up in bed, with only his right arm and shoulder exposed, talked brilliantly for forty minutes. He referred sarcastically to an assertion of one Republican Senator, Moses, of New Hampshire, that he had suffered a brain lesion and loss of memory. Hitchcock and Fall reported to their colleagues that, no matter what the President's physical condition was, his mind was vigorous and active. It was at this inter-

view that Fall said sententiously that he would pray for the invalid and Wilson afterward remarked, with vast disgust, that he had never yearned so much to strike a man. He whimsically referred to the visitors as the "Senate's smelling committee."

When Congress reconvened a battle royal began. Several irreconcilable Democrats joined the Republicans in fighting the treaty. The Senate voted overwhelmingly in favor of Irish independence and Ireland's eligibility to membership in the League of Nations. Article 10, which Wilson had called the "heart of the Covenant", found few defenders. Violently the anti-Wilson coalition undermined the cause for which the President had given his health. In the heat of the struggle there was no consideration of his illness. No resolution of sympathy was ever offered in either house of Congress. The dominating clique had but one idea: to unseat Wilson and destroy his handiwork.

While the battle raged in the Senate, Wilson rebelled at the isolation of his sickroom. He insisted upon being wheeled to the White House portico where, outside the window of Secretary Tumulty's office, he could receive the latest news. Day by day, wrapped in blankets, he waited expectantly, grasping each morsel of information Tumulty could give him. There was no compromise, no dimming of spirit in that wasted figure.

Tumulty, who had been warned by Mrs. Wilson and Dr. Grayson not to alarm the President unduly, came to him one morning on the portico when the defeat of the treaty was inevitable. Seeking to conceal his

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feelings over the bad news Tumulty remarked: "Governor, you are looking very well today." The invalid's eyes blazed as he looked keenly at his faithful secretary. "I am very well for a man who awaits disaster," he said and turned his head away.

In the spring, when the Treaty was finally defeated and the President's enemies were triumphant, Wilson's only remark was: "They have shamed us in the eyes of the world." "But, Governor," insisted Tumulty, who had broken the news, "only the Senate has defeated you. The people will vindicate you." Wilson sadly shook his head. "Our enemies have poisoned the wells of public opinion," he remarked. "They have made the people believe that the League of Nations is a great juggernaut, the object of which is to bring war and not peace to the world. If I only could have remained well long enough to have convinced the people that the League was their real hope, their last chance, perhaps, to save civilization!"

During Wilson's illness vital domestic matters pressed upon the country. Congress passed the Volstead Act, defining as intoxicating any beverage containing over one half of one per cent of alcohol. Wilson, never an advocate of prohibition, vetoed the act. With startling prevision of what has happened in America under Volsteadism he said: "You cannot regulate the morals and habits of a great cosmopolitan people by placing unreasonable restrictions upon their liberty and freedom. All such attempts can only end in failure and disappointment. In the last analysis, in these matters that

seek to regulate personal habits and customs, public opinion is the great regulator." Congress promptly passed the Volstead Act over the veto.

Before the President started on the western trip, he had called an industrial conference for October 6 to seek a solution for threatening labor troubles. His illness, of course, prevented his attendance. Herbert Hoover took his place. Nothing was accomplished and a great strike closed the steel mills. Though it failed, a more serious strike loomed in the bituminous coal fields. In mid-October more than 400,000 miners were ordered to stop work on November 1. The effect upon the industry would be incalculable. From his sickbed Wilson denounced the strike as "a grave moral and legal wrong against the government and the people of the United States."

The President's failure to hold the mine owners equally at fault offended labor leaders. They were enraged when Wilson's Attorney General, Palmer, obtained an injunction forbidding the strike. The procedure was not only contrary to Wilson's oft expressed views but completely opposed to the social and economic philosophy of the Democratic party. The sick executive was denounced as an autocrat and reactionary. Labor turned upon its former champion. However, the mine workers obeyed the injunction. John L. Lewis, their spokesman, announced on November 10: "We will comply with the mandate of the court. We do it under protest. We are Americans. We cannot fight our government."

Attorney General Palmer, nursing presidential hopes,

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now launched a campaign against radicals. Thousands of bewildered foreigners were jailed or deported as dangerous "reds". It was an exhibition of which not many Americans are now proud. And it puzzled those who looked upon Wilson as a great liberal.

Wilson's health gradually improved. With the aid of an old blackthorn cane he had used at Princeton he was able to hobble a few steps.

For months there had rankled in his mind a determination to rid himself of his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing. Shortly before Wilson's illness, William C. Bullitt had testified before the Senate foreign relations committee that Lansing had said to him in Paris: "The American people do not know what the Treaty and the League of Nations is letting them in for." Infuriated, Wilson exclaimed: "Were I in Washington I would at once demand Mr. Lansing's resignation! That kind of disloyalty must not be permitted to go unchallenged for a single minute. I found the same attitude of mind on the part of Lansing on the other side. I could find his trail everywhere I went, but they were only suspicions. But here is a verification at last of everything I have suspected. Think of it! This from a man whom I raised from a subordinate to the great office of Secretary of State of the United States."

For months Wilson nursed his anger against Lansing. The Bullitt revelation grew stale, but in February the President built an issue from the fact that Lansing had called cabinet meetings during his illness and without his consent. This, he declared, was unconstitutional and he

demanded an explanation. Lansing replied temperately:

"Shortly after you were taken ill in October, certain members of the cabinet, of whom I was one, felt that, in view of the fact that we were denied communication with you, it was wise for us to confer informally together on interdepartmental matters and on matters as to which action could not be postponed until your medical advisers permitted you to pass upon them. Accordingly I, as the ranking member, requested the members of the Cabinet to assemble for such informal conferences, and in view of the mutual benefit derived the practice was continued. I can assure you that it never for a moment entered my mind that I was acting unconstitutionally or contrary to your wishes, and there certainly was no intention on my part to assume powers and exercise functions which under the Constitution are exclusively confided to the President."

Wilson made a tart rejoinder, intimating that Lansing's resignation would be welcome. Tumulty begged the President not to send the letter, saying the time was not opportune. Wilson flashed back, very much his old self: "Tumulty, it is never the wrong time to spike disloyalty. When Lansing sought to oust me, I was upon my back. I am on my feet now and I will not have disloyalty about me."

Lansing resigned on February 12, 1920, to be succeeded by Bainbridge Colby. Publication of the correspondence between the President and his former Secretary of State produced widespread sympathy for Lansing. Many decided that Wilson was not yet himself.

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A few days later, when Lansing was being hailed as an innocent victim of Wilson's spleen, the President roguishly asked Tumulty: "Well, Tumulty, have I any friends left?" "Very few, Governor," replied his truthful secretary.

It was not until April 13, 1920, that Wilson was able to attend a cabinet meeting, which was held in the President's study.

In his Washington reminiscences, "Eight Years with Wilson's Cabinet", David F. Houston, Secretary of Agriculture, gives us a description of the President on this occasion:

The President looked old, worn and haggard. It was enough to make one weep to look at him. One of his arms was useless. In repose, his face looked very much as usual, but when he tried to speak there were marked evidences of his trouble. His jaw tended to drop on one side, or seemed to do so. His voice was very weak and strained. I shook hands with him and sat down. He greeted me as of old. He put up a brave front and spent several minutes cracking jokes. Then there was brief silence. It appeared that he would not take the initiative. Some one brought up the railroad situation for discussion. The President seemed at first to have some difficulty in fixing his mind on what we were discussing. Dr. Grayson looked in at the door several times as if to

warn us not to prolong the discussion unduly for fear of wearying the President. The discussion dragged on for more than an hour. Finally, Mrs. Wilson came in, looking rather disturbed, and suggested that we had better go.

Disorganized and with a crippled chieftain, the Democrats made ready for the 1920 campaign.

In January Wilson had sent a letter to the annual Jackson Day dinner proposing submission of the League issue to the people. "If there is any doubt as to what the people of the country think on this vital matter," he wrote, "the clear and single way out is to submit it for determination at the next election, to give the election the form of a great and solemn referendum."

This note sent shivers down the backs of party leaders, for they feared that Wilson, sick as he was, might take it into his head to run again. His actions certainly indicated that he was not averse to the idea.

Before the San Francisco convention the President refused to give the slightest encouragement to any of the numerous Democratic candidates. These included his son-in-law, William G. McAdoo. When the convention assembled Wilson asked only unqualified endorsement of the League of Nations. This was given grudgingly by boss-controlled delegates who were sick of the war and sick of the wrangle over the Treaty. Gov. James M. Cox, of Ohio, finally won the nomination. He called at the White House and agreed to support the League of Nations. Cox's running mate was Franklin



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Delano Roosevelt, of New York, youthful assistant Secretary of the Navy, destined twelve years later to be elected the first Democratic President of the United States since Wilson.

The Republicans united behind Senator Warren G. Harding, a mild, pleasant gentleman who ran a newspaper in Marion, Ohio. Harding's campaign was well financed and adroitly managed. Wilson's alleged efforts to involve America in European affairs was the chief issue. The election was a débâcle for the Democrats. Harding defeated Cox by an electoral majority of 277 and a popular majority of more than 7,000,000 votes. Wilson had received an unmistakable answer to his request for a "great and solemn referendum".

It was a dark hour, but Wilson's faith in the ultimate triumph of the League did not weaken. "We are winning, Cecil, we are winning," he said to Lord Robert Cecil, a White House visitor. "Hold fast. Don't compromise." To another visitor he said: "What more could I have done? I had to negotiate at Paris with my back to the wall. Men thought I had all power. Would to God I had had such power! The 'great' people at home wrote and wired every day that they were against me. But we shall come back, return to those high levels we have abandoned. No good cause is ever lost. Is there anything I can do? I am still ready to serve."

On March 4, 1921, the President, pale and gray, rode to the Capitol beside his tanned, ruddy successor. Wilson made his way slowly to the President's Room and

sat for the last time at his desk. Senator Harding modestly took a seat in the rear of the room.

As the clock ticked on towards noon Wilson finished his last routine business. Senator Knox came in and invited him to attend the inauguration of the Vice-President in the adjoining Senate Chamber. Wilson explained that he could not climb the few steps separating the rooms, adding with a flash of his old humor: "The Senate has thrown me down but I don't want to fall down."

A moment before twelve Senator Lodge entered and announced formally: "Mr. President, the Senate and House are about to adjourn and await your pleasure." Wilson turned a smouldering look of hatred upon his implacable foe. For a moment it seemed as if he would lose control. Gripping the arm of his chair firmly he replied: "I have no further communication to make."

As the clock struck the hour, Wilson struggled to his feet.

Leaning heavily on his cane, the ferrule tapping sharply on the pavement, he made his way to a closed carriage. As Wilson drove away a new President appeared at the east end of the Capitol to deliver his inaugural address.

The crowd cheered and the United States Marine band struck up: "Hail to the Chief."

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*Chapter 16*

SUNSET

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## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### SUNSET

A SURPRISE AWAITED WOODROW WILSON, PRIVATE CITIZEN, as he drove up to his new home on S Street Northwest, Washington.

A crowd of several thousand people, forsaking the brilliant spectacle at the Capitol, had gathered outside the Georgian mansion to pay their tribute. They were just plain people, people to whom Wilson had so often turned during his stormy struggles, people who had caught his vision. A radiant smile broke over the grim features of the ex-President as he haltingly made his way through their cheers to his door.

This marked the beginning of Wilson as a legend and a myth. During the months that followed, thousands of men and women from all parts of the earth made pilgrimages to the house on S Street. It became a veritable shrine. Wilson's dramatic rise, his tragic fall, his worn and broken body portraying so vividly the sacrifice to his cause, all contributed to the halo his followers built around him. Indeed, Woodrow Wilson enjoyed during his last years of life an honor rarely accorded the living—a sense of immortality.

Wilson thrived on this adulation. More than any medicine it relieved his incurable sufferings. It spurred him on. At moments he even considered taking an active

part in politics again. Never, for an instant, did he relax leadership in the fight for the League of Nations.

In the luxurious home Edith Bolling Wilson now made for him, he led a life of Spartan simplicity. His sickness demanded the most constant of care. Motor rides; a weekly visit to a vaudeville theater which he enjoyed heartily and, as he was able, a few visits from friends were his chief relaxations. Cloistered though his life was, he kept in close touch with domestic and foreign events, reading with lively interest half a dozen newspapers daily. Though often barely able to walk, he insisted at meal times upon standing while saying grace. A Bible was always at his bedside. He read it nightly. The faithful Edith Bolling was ever within call.

On November 11, 1921, Wilson made his first public appearance since leaving office, at the burial of the Unknown Soldier. It was on his own initiative. Oddly enough, Wilson received no invitation to join the procession. He immediately wrote the officer in charge asking that he be assigned a place in the line of march. The officer replied formally that no provision had been made for him. Wilson's next appeal to the Secretary of War proving unsatisfactory, he called the matter to President Harding's attention. The latter answered graciously, writing that he rarely went over the heads of subordinates but in this case he would be glad to make an exception. Wilson's place in the procession would be immediately behind Chief Justice Taft.

Wilson's infirmities, of course, were such that he could not walk nor was he in the allotted place as the



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ONE OF THE LAST PHOTOGRAPHS  
OF PRESIDENT WILSON

*This picture was taken on his sixty-fifth birthday.*





parade wended its way to Arlington. Instead, the former President headed the veterans in a carriage. Despite the solemnity of the occasion thunderous acclaim greeted him.

When visitors were permitted at the S Street home, Col. House was not among them. Soon Tumulty, too, was missing. The faithful secretary delivered an innocuous message, which he thought had been authorized by Wilson, at a complimentary dinner in New York in April, 1922, to James M. Cox. It was construed as committing Wilson to support the presidential candidacy of Cox in 1924. Wilson immediately made a formal statement to the press: "I did not send any message whatever to that dinner nor authorize anyone to convey a message."

The blow almost crushed poor Tumulty, whose only thought had been to carry out the slightest wish of his former chief. Barred from Wilson, the warm-hearted Irishman poured out his grief in a letter to Mrs. Wilson. He quoted a passage from the play "Liliom" to express his feelings:

*Louise:* Is it possible for some one to hit you hard like that—real loud and hard—and not hurt you at all?

*Julie:* It is possible, dear, that some one whom you love may beat you and beat you and beat you—and not hurt you at all.

Tumulty ended his letter: "I shall always be around the corner when you or yours need me."

Tumulty remained "around the corner". His offense, if offense it was, was certainly not serious. There was in Wilson a streak of steel that would not yield. Once he had made an issue, he became inflexible. It was the Wilson way. Though Tumulty was relegated to the long list of cast-offs, including Harvey, House and so many others, Wilson later unbent to the extent of suggesting his former secretary as an ideal candidate for the United States Senatorship from New Jersey. But the smiling Irishman was no longer welcome at the S Street mansion.

One member of the original New Jersey group, James Kerney, editor of the *Trenton Times*, continued in Wilson's favor. Kerney vividly recalls his last chats with the former President. On October 23, 1923, he found Wilson seated in an armchair by the library fireside.

"He was most cordial in his words of welcome," writes Kerney, "but remarked sadly: 'I'm helpless, Kerney; this left side is gone.' By him stood the ever-faithful Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, mistress of the home, whose life and activities for four years had been devoted to the incurable invalid. After the exchange of greetings Mrs. Wilson retired and I took a seat beside the crushed form. Bruised and faded, he was still clinging to his rainbow. There would be flashes of hope that the vision of freeing mankind from storms and sorrows would yet come true, then sad periods of dejection. The hair was thin and white; the jaw drooped. He mostly looked straight ahead, not directly at you. A twisted half-smile occasionally softened lines carved deep by

struggle and suffering; the pallor of long confinement was on the cheek. Gone was the upstanding figure that a dozen years earlier had so blithely and confidently met Smith, Nugent and me in the lovely old mansion at Princeton. Gone, too, was the simplicity of those happier times. The spacious rooms and formal furnishings of the S Street house were in marked contrast with the cozy atmosphere of the Princeton home. His spirit appeared to be badly shot that October day. The morning newspapers had printed official denials of one of those periodic news-ticker rumors of his death. I think the visit of David Lloyd George on the previous afternoon had been a bit of a disappointment, too. According to the former President, about all that Lloyd George appeared to want to hear was a repetition of some of the limericks with which Wilson had regaled the European statesmen at Paris and Versailles."

When Kerney suggested that Wilson himself stand for the Senate the latter replied:

"I am going to try and look at myself as though I did not exist, to just consider the whole thing in an impersonal way. From the messages I get I realize that I am everywhere regarded as the foremost leader of the liberal thought of the world, and the hopes and aspirations of that liberal thought should find some better place of expression than in the Senate. There is only one place, you know, where I could be sure of effectively asserting that leadership. Outside of the United States, the Senate does not amount to a damn. And inside the United States the Senate is mostly despised; they haven't

had a thought down there in fifty years. You know and I know that I have a temper, and if I were to go to the Senate I would get into a row with that old Lodge, who no longer counts for anything. The Senate would hardly provide the place for liberal leadership that the world is seeking so sadly. Think of the people of Poland and of Czechoslovakia and the other countries whose freedom we gave them—they know that they owe their very national existence to me, and they are looking to me to lead them! When I think of that fine old fellow, Jan Smuts, for whom I have the greatest affection, and the others of liberal tendencies who are looking to me, I feel that I should do my part. Perhaps we can yet find some way out."

Kerney continues:

"When I went back to see Wilson on December 7 he was in better spirits. His eye was bright, his mind fairly flashed with sharp things, and he had some of the snap that characterized the earlier days at Trenton and Washington. He reclined in a big steamer-chair, wrapped comfortably in a blanket, on the upper sun-porch of his home. It was balmy as springtime in Paris, and we chatted for nearly an hour."

On this occasion Wilson recited a number of limericks, one of which he had fashioned himself to shock a prim woman friend:

There was a young girl from Missouri  
Who took her case to the jury.

She said, "Car Ninety-three

Ran over my knee."

But the jury said, "We're from Missouri."

The ex-President was elated, too, over the response he had received from a brief radio speech on Armistice Day. In this talk he had denounced America's "sullen and selfish isolation", continuing:

That we should thus have done a great wrong to civilization, and at one of the most critical turning points in the history of mankind, is the more to be deplored because every anxious year that has followed has made the exceeding need for such services as we might have rendered more and more manifest and more pressing.

As demoralizing circumstances which we might have controlled have gone from bad to worse, until now—as if to furnish a sort of sinister climax—France and Italy between them have made waste paper of the Treaty of Versailles, and the whole field of international relationships is in perilous confusion.

The affairs of the world can be set straight only by the firmest and most determined exhibition of the will to lead and to make the right prevail.

That same day, in a voice almost inaudible, he ad-

dressed a crowd of faithful followers that massed about his door.

"I am not one of those," he said, "that have the least anxiety about the triumph of the principles I have stood for. I have seen fools resist Providence before and I have seen their destruction, as will come upon these again—utter destruction and contempt. That we shall prevail is as sure as that God reigns."

That was Wilson's last public speech.

During the holidays he failed rapidly. Late in January he went into a coma. He died in his sleep on the morning of February 3, 1924.

"One of the most striking things concerning his passing from human life," writes Josephus Daniels, Wilson's former Secretary of the Navy, "was his extraordinary appearance after death. Near the window in his bedroom in which the sunlight fell softly and freely upon a couch lay Woodrow Wilson, in appearance thirty-five or forty years of age. His hair was prematurely gray for his features. The lines of care, of anxiety and of weakness had disappeared. The outlines of the face were smooth and beautiful. It was as if a distant sunrise had touched the features."

On February 6 they laid him to rest in the crypt of the Episcopal Cathedral at Mount Saint Alban, Washington.

Here, in the church of an alien faith, lies the man who fought with the spirit of Calvin, leaving behind a world still hoping for the magic of his formula.



